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A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION

No.24 1985/1986

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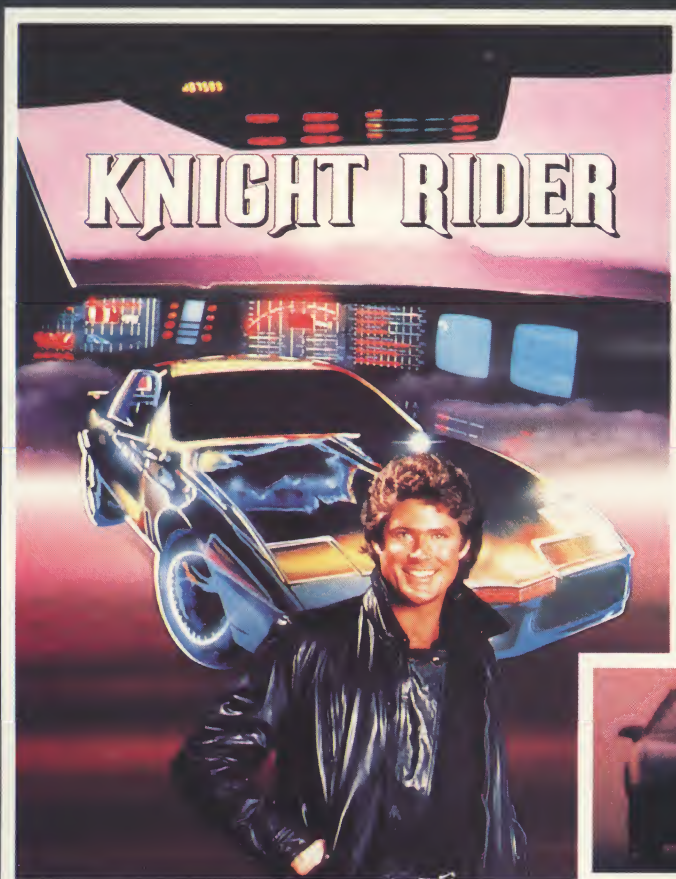
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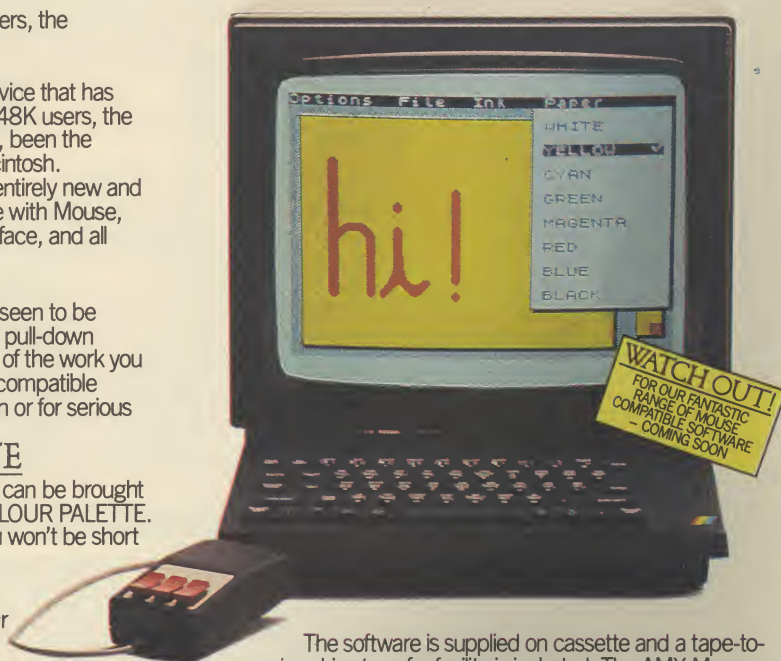
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CRASH

ZX SPECTRUM



DIY

THIRTEEN MAY BE UNLUCKY FOR SOME

But there's going to be lots and lots of winners in our Christmas Competitions this year. Can you afford the chance to pick up so many free goodies?

44 SWORDS AND SWORCERY

Well, Swords and Sorcery really. Win a Dragon's Lair laser disk video machine

46 THE OCEAN EXTRAVAGANZA

Ocean Goodiebags and bags of games up for grabs

69 WIN A SYNTHESISER

In Micro Musical's MIDI competition

82+83 WIN THE COMPLETE WORKS — TWO CHANCES

Melbourne House sponsor a couple of caption comps for Rock 'n Wrestling and Fighting Warrior

96 YABBA DABBA DOO

A colour telly and three VTX5000s up for grabs in the Fred Flintstone Comp

101 A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Or a diary for your dates. 50 Letts computer diaries to be won, with educational software as top prize

122 EEK! A SCARY ONE

Fifty T Shirts for fifty runners up and a weekend in London for the winner in Domark's Friday the 13th Comp

125 THE ULTIMATE FIGHTING MACHINE

You've got to design it in Martech's Zoid Challenge

128 Ballblazer cassettes to be won, apart from the VTX5000s, that is

134 CREAM OF THE CROP

US Gold have a couple of Microdrive and Interface 1 packs up for grabs. 50 Impossible Missions, too

136 ONE FOR THE OLIFANS

Your comp minion secures an Oli Original to give away. And the winner can collect it from Ludlow and have a day out at CRASH Towers

156 THE SINCLAIR STORY

Duckworths, the publishers, are giving away copies of their biography of Sir Clive Sinclair

172 HEWSON'S EXTRAVAGANZA

Play Programmer's Photofit and win Hewson's Goodiebags. Worth lots of money, they are

ISSUE No. 24
1985/86

FEATURES

70 LOOKBACK

Lloyd Mangram peers into his backward-looking Crystal Ball and revisits the games of 1985

88 GOING GA-GARGOYLE

A trip to the Dudley lair of Gargoyle games reveals the secrets behind the men who brought you TIR NA NOG, DUN DARACH and MARSPOUT

126 THE HUMAN TOUCH

A Little Christmas Diversion — a short story by Wilf Prigmore

141 THE CRASH READERS' AWARDS

Your chance to have your say about what went on in 1985

174 AT THE CONSULTANTS

Hewson Consultants, that it. Roger Kean (for it is he) learns a few secrets of the future

188 ON THE COVER

Another treat. Lots and lots of background on Oli Frey, our very own Airbrush Maestro

REGULARS

49 CRASH FORUM

Once again Lloyd picks over your letters. For the festive season, he's arranged a Bug Box Special

103 CANDYRAMA — PLAYING TIPS PART ONE

A veritable compendium of POKES, lots of tips and a map of Starquake

114 CRASH HOTLINE AND ADVENTURE CHART

117 PLAYING TIPS PART TWO

Is there no stopping the lad?

139 LLOYD MANGRAM'S HALL OF SLIME

Christmas Creepy Crawly High Score types air their egos

147 TECH NICHE

Fast Storage roundup; The Plastic Policeman; Art Studio and more

157 RESULTS

A selection of lucky winners get their names in print and prizes in the post

161 ADVENTURE TRAIL

Derek Brewster's thrown into a dungeon in Swords and Sorcery, and visits a whole host of strange places

169 SIGNPOST

Including Signstumps, tips for adventurers in difficulties as well as another Superhero and letters

180 FRONTLINE

Mr Masterson's Strategy Shop

The 23rd January is the first date in 1986 not to miss. February CRASH is in the shops, that's why!

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FESTIVE FELICITATIONS

Ho Hum. Another eventful year comes to an end and the only polite thing to do is thank all the people and organisations whose efforts made 1985 fun and successful. Ta.

CRASH Towers started the year with what seemed like an endless supply of empty dungeons and corridors in which half a dozen people rattled around like peas in an empty supertanker. The spiders had room to breathe — but little to eat.

Now, twelve months later, we share our pitifully small offices with mountains of binders, the ZZAP! crew (whose arrival with a vanload of chattels and mess from Yeovil dramatically reduced our Lebensraum) and lots of new members of staff. It's difficult to avoid tripping over people, nowadays, as CRASH Towers is bursting at the seams with minions, reviewers, writers, gophers, gophers's gophers, artpersons, editors, NEC's, Apricots, Commodores and Amstrads. And the spiders are growing fat on the scraps of hurried office lunches.

Soon we will be wading through your Readers' Awards forms, and collating the results. On a lighter note, let's proceed with the CRASH Writer's Awards:

Oliver Frey — an award for remaining in the Art Garret of the Towers, painting covers with stinky inks with little regard for his health, sanity and complexion. AN UNCLOGGABLE AIRBRUSH

Franco Frey — for ploughing his way through endless reams of technobabble to render the incomprehensible, comprehensible. And for ruling the Mail Order department with a rod of ... well with a firm hand. A SELF-SIGNING GOLDEN CHEQUEBOOK.

David Western — for liaising with advertisers beyond the call of final deadlines, and for convincing our printers that we may be a day late but are still nice fellows. A SELF-FILLING, BOTTOMLESS TEA MUG.

Jeremy Spencer — for Editing Software, introducing us to Amstrads, wittering on endlessly about Amstrads, and then deserting to AMTIX! (and continuing to witter on about "Straddles") A FRIENDLY POKE IN THE EYE WITH A WET SPONGE while he witters on about Amstrads

John Minson — for scampering round the streets of London, attending launches and getting lots of freebie booze and grub down his neck before writing news items. A NICE, SOBER, PLAIN WHITE Van Heusen SHIRT

Gary Liddon — for deserting Domark, leaving them tealeess, and coming to CRASH Towers and leaving us tealeess while he covers the office in breakfast breadcrumbs. AN INEDIBLE RUBBER SANDWICH

Roger Kean — for running off to ZZAP! and becoming a Publishing Executive. SECOND GO AT THE WET SPONGE

Robin Candy — for spoiling the fun of people who can't bear not to read his pages, and for covering the office in Crisp

Packets (empty). THE OLD PLAYING TIPS LOGO FOR ALL TIME

Auntie Aggie — for wearing her fingers to the bone as she sends off all your goodies while entertaining telephone callers. A GOLDEN JIFFY BAG

Dennis, the Subscription Queen — for appearing in the gossip column of the industry newspaper, *Computer Trade Weekly*. A PAGE THREE APPEARANCE IN "COOKS AND COOKERY"

The Competition Minion — for pestering people to stump up prizes, setting competitions and hiding in the broom cupboard. A ROUND OF DRINKS AT THE FROG AND LILYPAD (he pays)

Lloyd Mangram — for assiduously (LMLWD) declining to be photographed, continually demanding more money and less work despite immense royalties earned on his dictionary, and for fighting off all the bugs in Bug Box. A BOTTLE OF HERMES CLEANING FLUID

Graeme Kidd — as nominated by the other inhabitants of the Towers — for frightening us all by shaving his head, wearing big shiny red Doc Martens and drinking too much Old Flatulence Bitter. A GREEN MOHICAN WIG

Messrs Penn and Rignall from ZZAP! — for mess-making

beyond the call of duty, and changing the air in CRASH Towers to a subtle shade of blue. A TANKER FULL OF STYLING MOUSSE (three week's supply) **Ben Stone** — for being a trendy London wide-boy who feels undressed without at least a Pringle Jumper, Nike shoes and stonewash jeans. A TESCO TEARAWAY ROMPER SUIT

Sally Newman, Mail Order Dragon — for nagging everyone beyond the call of duty A BOX OF FIREFIGHTERS TO GET STARTED ON COLD WINTER MORNINGS

De Grays, purveyors of sandwiches and sweetmeats to the Ludlow cognoscenti (LMLWD again), and to Gary Liddon — A REQUEST. Could you bar Gary Liddon? Pretty Please?

And finally, to Poddy, Mr Spencer's Dog — for keeping the office plant well watered. A BITE OUT OF MR LIDDON (And serve them both right, too)

And on that fine note, all that's left to do is wish all our readers, advertisers, printers, distributors, newsagents, typesetters, as well as software houses A HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

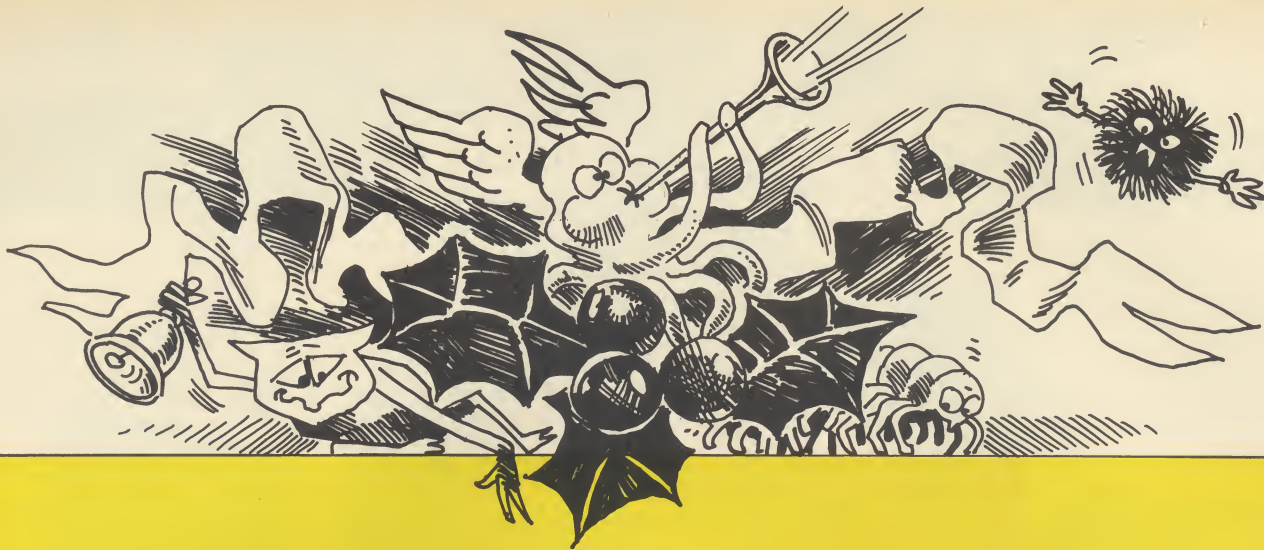
End of public service announcement. It's time to start work on the February issue. See you then ...

INDEX TO GAMES REVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE

Austerlitz Lothlorien	180	Robin of the Wood Odin	10
Beach Head II US Gold	13	Robot Messiah Alphabatic	16
Chimera Firebird	40	Rockman Mastertronic	15
Commando Elite	130	Roller Coaster Elite	32
Endurance CRL	14	Saboteur Durell	30
The Evil Crown Mind Games (Argus)	181	Screenplay MacMillan	36
Geoff Capes Strongman		Seas of Blood Fighting Fantasy	164
Martech	42	Shadow of the Unicorn	
Gladiator Domark	21	Mikro-Gen	164
International Karate		Souls of Darkon Taskset	166
System 3	22	Spellbound Mastertronic	26
Ludoids Bug Byte	168	Swords and Sorcery PSS	162
Panzadrome Ariola	13	Sweevo's World Gargoyle	23
Quest for the Holy Grail		Vectron Insight	36
Mastertronic	168		

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

AT & Y	151	Imagine	20, 84, 133, 177
Advance Memory Systems	4	Insight	54, 85, 93
Adventure International	167	Interprint	40
Alligata	95	Kempston	173
Alphabatic	94	Leisure Genius	116
Argus	68, 124, 179	Lerm	56
Automata	64	Level 9	162
Beyond	144, 145, 171	Lothlorien	57
Bubble Bus	41	Mancomp	50
CCS	181	Melbourne House	53, 193
CRASH Back Numbers	176	Microcentre	153
CRASH Binders	23	Micropower	86
CRASH Mail Order	66	Microsphere	38
CRL	113	Mikro-Gen	76, 165
Cascade	59	Mirrorsoft	17
Century	51	Monolith	143
Creative Devices	119	New Concept	102
Datel	123	Nidd Valley	101
Design Design	112	OCP	155
Digital Integration	65	Ocean	2, 3, 9, 37, 111, 146
Domark	29, 63	Odin	25, 132
Durell	105	Peaksoft	61
Electric Dreams	81	Real Time	73
Elite	18, 19, 92, 178, Back Cover	Software Projects	186, 187
Euromax	135	Taskset	28
Firebird	33, 34, 35, 129, 159	The Edge	160
Frel Ltd	45	US Gold	
Gargoyle	6, 121		48, 74, 100, 109, 185, 195
Gilsoft	163	Ultimate	75, 191
Gremlin Graphics	67	Video Vault	43
Hewson Consultants	87	Virgin	90
		Walkers	60



CRASH - SINCLAIR USER

In the August issue of CRASH Magazine we printed a section which was intended as a spoof of *Sinclair User*.

We acknowledge that the contents of this section contained wholly unjustified allegations and inferences which adversely reflected on the integrity of *Sinclair User* and certain members of its editorial staff.

We wish unreservedly to apologise to *Sinclair User*, its publishers and editorial staff who we know from continued contact to be knowledgeable and professional journalists and highly respected in the home computer industry. We consider that *Sinclair User* is a magazine of the highest quality. We regret having given any indication to the contrary. We also fully accept that its dealings with the software industry should never have been called into question.

Finally, through our discussions with *Sinclair User*'s publishers, we can state without hesitation that both of our magazines wish to put our differences behind us and continue in friendly competition to serve the Sinclair computer market.

NEWSFIELD
GRAEME KIDD



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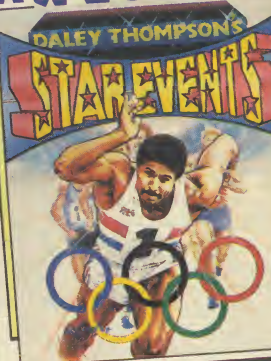
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ROBIN OF THE WOOD

Producer: Odin
Computer Graphics
Retail price: £9.95
Language: machine code
Author: Odin team

From a time outside history, before the language of the English was ever written down, there come to us stories and legends of heroes and valiant folk. One such story tells of Robin, son of Aleric, keeper of the Arrow. This silver arrow was a symbol of freedom and peace to the Saxon nation and it came into the Sheriff of Nottingham's possession after he arranged for Aleric's death. The arrow meant nothing to the Sheriff, and the years passed as the Normans continued to rob and exploit the Saxons.

Many years later, Aleric's son, Robin, became a thorn in the Sheriff's side. He had grown up and become the hero of the Saxon race, creating havoc by robbing the rich and giving to the poor. Realising the value of the Silver Arrow to the Saxons, the Sheriff announced that it would be the prize in an archery contest. Knowing that Robin would not be able to resist the challenge, the Sheriff sent his Norman knights out into the wood to hunt for Robin.

It is the day of the archery contest and you play the part of Robin. It is your mission to recover the arrow, The Shaft of Power, for the Saxon nation. Before making your way to the Sheriff's castle to enter the contest, you must first complete several other tasks in the forest. The old wise Ent (remember them from *Lord of the Rings*?) has in his keeping your bow, your sword and three magical arrows. In order to get these you must give the Ent three bags of gold for each weapon. The gold is in the possession of the Evil Bishop of Peterborough, who has an escort of crossbow-wielding Normans: some nifty fighting is needed before he can be robbed.

There are three areas in the game: the forest, the castle dungeons and the castle itself. The forest is a maze of leafy



Just when he was doing so well! Hemmed in by two nasty Normans, Robin is about to be banished to the castle dungeons by the nasty Sheriff who's just appeared. Robin's collected three flowers, a quiver full of arrows, two extra lives and a key. So he shouldn't have too much trouble escaping from the dungeon

glades and tree-lined pathways through which the animated figure of Robin runs. Objects, including extra lives, flowers and arrows are scattered round the forest floor. All Robin has to do to pick them is move over

them and squat down. Apart from the marauding Norman soldiers who have orders to shoot on sight, and do their best to inflict wounds, there are other characters in the wood who will help or hinder you. While trav-

elling to the castle you will encounter witches, who materialise from time to time. A witch will send you to the castle dungeon unless she's given the right amount of flowers. On the other hand, if a witch is given



flowers, she may help by transporting Robin to another location. A visit to the hermit doctor will pay dividends if you have been injured — but he isn't too nice if you're carrying weapons.

Boars run loose in the forest, and contact with a tusked terror leads to injuries. Occasionally you cross the path of the Sheriff of Nottingham, who has you imprisoned in his dungeons if he spots you. It is possible to escape from the dungeons, but not without a key!

Once you have got all the

weapons and got into the castle you are able to enter the tournament and have a chance of winning the arrow. The three magical arrows purchased from the Ent will safeguard you against being recognised by the Sheriff, but once you have fired the last magic arrow you will be spotted, and must escape before getting caught.

Throughout the game your status is displayed at the bottom of the screen, together with the objects carried. Robin's health is represented by a pair of antlers



A forest scene, with Robin resting after having just done a Norman to death — the little blue helmet's all that's left...

which change colour according to his energy level. Naturally, if Robin's wounds become too severe, he dies, and care must be taken as you only have one life at the start of the game.

Just below the antlers the objects carried and extra lives obtained are displayed. Robin begins the game with a quarter-staff, which is perfectly adequate for despatching the Normans, but will only work in hand to hand combat. Other weapons can be used against the foe, and will come into action as appropriate, once you have bought them from the Ent.

CRITICISM

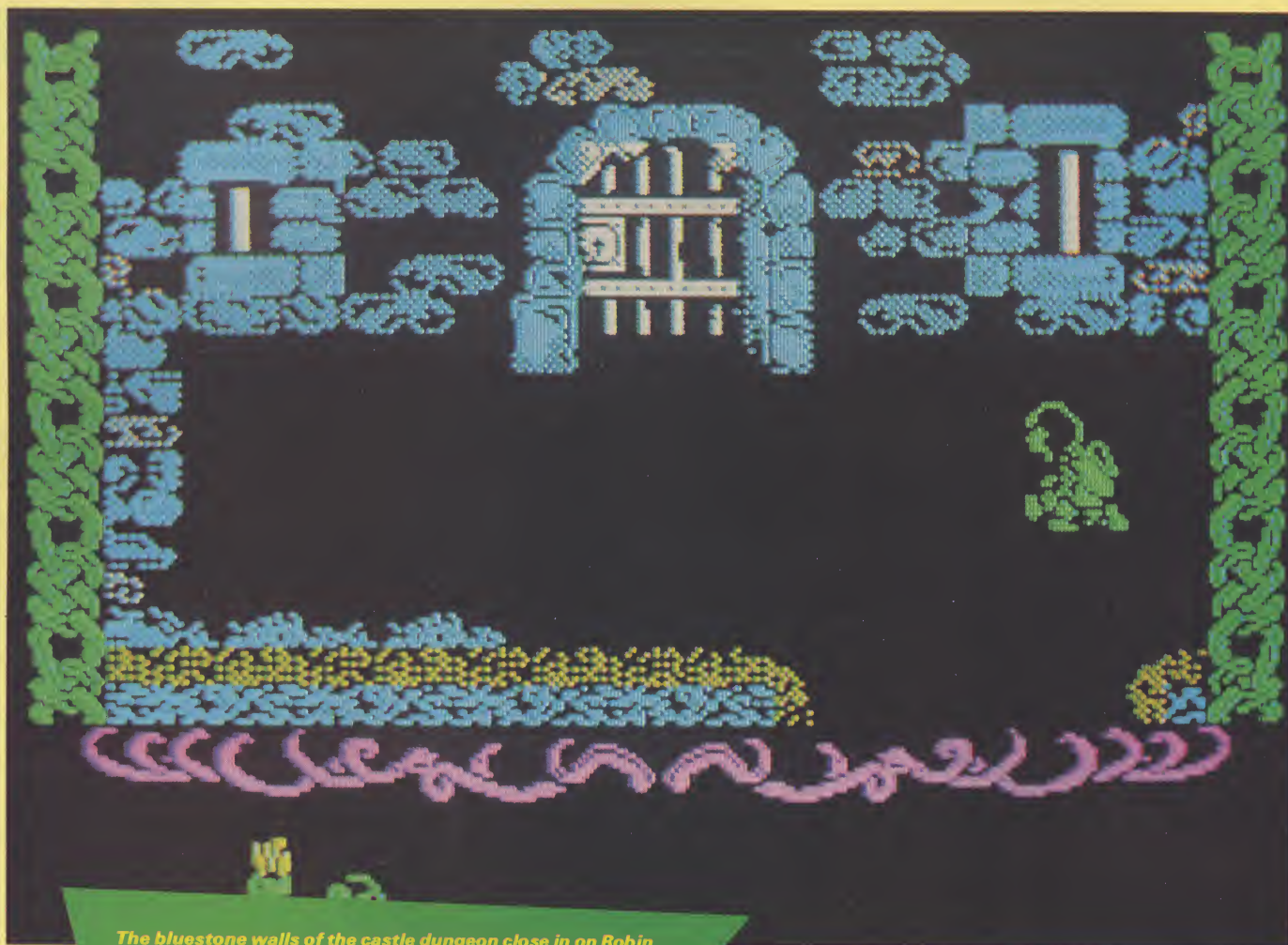
● 'Odin's first release, Nodes of Yesod, was quite unexpected and proved to be an excellent game. Could they keep up the standards set by their previous game and produce the goods in Robin of the Wood? Thankfully, the answer is yes! Graphically this game is excellent, and the attention to detail is evident throughout. The programmers are obviously perfectionists. The high standard of the graphics has not been at the expense of colour: there are few attribute problems. Some cynics may say that the game looks like a Sabre Wulf variant, but it is much more involved, and character interaction plays an important part in Robin of the Wood. The animation is very well done — just watch Robin use his bow or attack a Norman

with his trusty sword! The game makes quite a fun beat em up! Robin of the Wood is definitely another hit from the Odin stable. I can't wait for The Arc of Yesod.'

● 'Everyone at CRASH Towers was eagerly awaiting Robin of the Wood. Then the finished copy arrived and was loaded up. 'Wow! What colour' I thought as Robin materialised on the screen. When everyone else had had their go, I finally got my hands on it. Robin's a great little character in the way he plods around the forest. After a few plays I realized that there was more behind the forest than first meets the eye. And it's a very colourful one — even with red and blue trees. You get a taste of the aggro to come when you go around hitting everyone in sight with your staff — which is great fun. After a while you get to hate witches. Every time I came across one I had no flowers and she she nicked my money bags. The Bishop and other characters are fantastically animated and when you get into the castle the colour used is amazing. This game is one of the most addictive I've played and I would recommend it to anyone.'

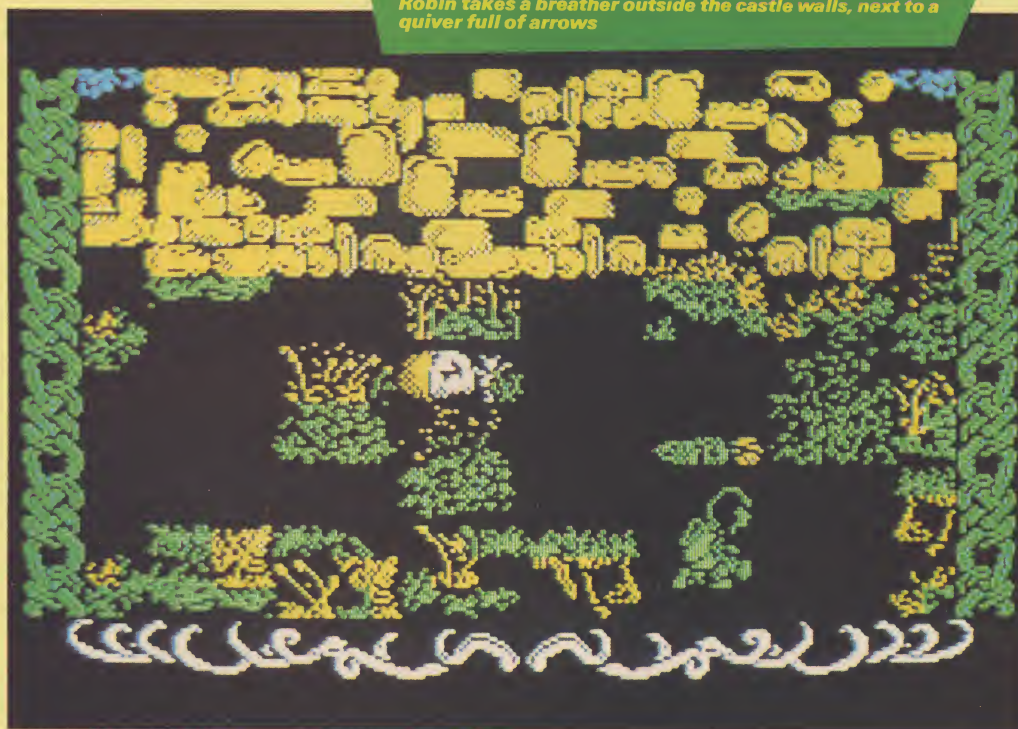
● 'Though first impressions lead you believe Robin of the Wood is yet another Sabre Wulf clone, upon closer inspection it soon becomes apparent that a lot more thought and ingenuity has gone into its creation. The graphics are impeccable, animationally superior to nearly every other release on the Spectrum. The statics are very good too,

R·O·B·I·N O·F T·H·E W·O·O·D



The bluestone walls of the castle dungeon close in on Robin

Robin takes a breather outside the castle walls, next to a quiver full of arrows



giving a really woody atmosphere with realistically drawn flora and fauna. I thought the red boards were great, scuffling realistically across the screen. This is certainly a great step forward for Odin — it's even better than the excellent *Nodes of Yesod*.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: definable
Joystick: Kempston, Protek and Cursor types, Interface 2
Keyboard play: very responsive
Use of colour: excellent variety, with few attribute problems
Graphics: beautifully done, detailed and well executed
Sound: some recognisable speech plus a nice tune at the start of the game
Skill levels: 1
Screens: 330
General rating: an excellent game that should appeal to everyone

Use of computer	89%
Graphics	95%
Playability	96%
Getting started	88%
Addictive qualities	94%
Value for money	90%
Overall	94%

BEACH HEAD II

Producer: US Gold
Retail price: £7.95
Language: machine code
Author: Platinum Productions

After his numerous defeats in the Pacific during World War II, the Allies' enemy, 'The Dragon' has set himself up as an evil dictator commanding a squadron of crack troops who worship him as a Demigod. The man is a lunatic and a megalomaniac — something has to be done. Stryker, the Allies' most competent Commander leads an attack upon the crazed power monger's stronghold. To defeat him, a number of defences must be overcome so the evil warlord can be killed.

In the interests of variety, you can take on the role of either the Allies or the Dictator when playing a one-player game, or can battle it out in a two-player contest.

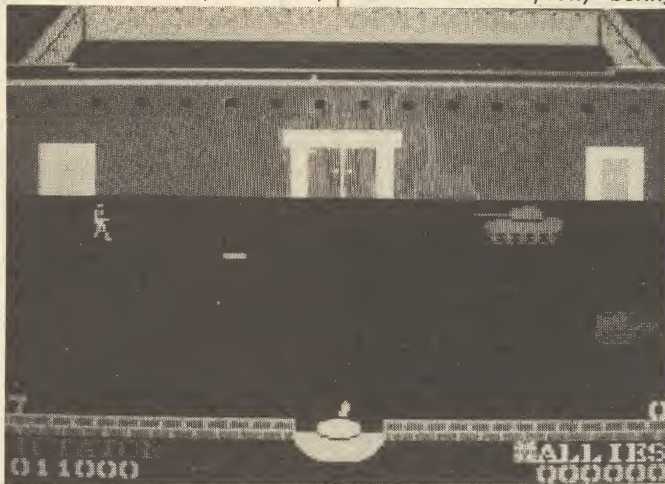
On the first screen, Allied troops have to be airdropped into the warzone from a helicopter. Fire drops a soldier, but if the helicopter's too low to allow the chute to open in time you get peopleburger all over the terrain. On landing, the soldiers make a dash for the nearest wall, trying to avoid fire from a machine gun manned by one of the Dragon's stooges. The machine gunner is hampered by the fact that it takes time for him to react and turn the gun to point at the helpless troops. Once all the men are safely hiding behind the walls at the top they have to make their way to the bottom of the screen, avoiding the manic machine gunner's eagle eye.

The edges of the walls flash in a cycle along the length of the line. Pressing fire brings a man out, and he's controlled by the joystick as he runs down to the next section of wall. From the third wall, nearest the gun emplacement, the troops have to be manoeuvred to the bottom of the screen. The control method is the same, except pressing fire when controlling a man allows a grenade to be lobbed in the hope of totalling the pill box. Pressing fire twice when you select a wall sends down a computer controlled soldier — handy if a decoy is needed to draw fire.

On the second screen, hostages must be protected as they run the gauntlet against the Dragon's troops. Running short of ammo the enemy are desperate and throw just about anything at the fleeing captives. The allies have captured a gun that is used against the four different hazards that the escaping prisoner can easily fall foul of: a

soldier drops stones from the top of the wall the hostages have to walk beneath; a tank trundles on from the right and will happily squash anyone in its path; an armoured car drives from the left, firing a small calibre machine gun mounted inside and finally, enemy soldiers dump mines, popping out of trap doors to lay them. All these obstacles can be shot up, but accurate shooting is needed. If you shoot a hostage by mistake he doesn't get wounded, but just pauses for a while before moving on.

The penultimate scene is your chance to ferry the hostages to safety in four helicopters that fly



over a vertically scrolling landscape. Tanks and lookout posts placed upon the terrain at inconvenient locations hurl shells at the helicopters, making life tricky for the pilot. The difficulty of the terrain is decided by the Dragon before the section starts. Once the four helicopters are through, Commander Stryker finally gets to meet his arch enemy, the Dragon, in mortal combat.

The two opponents stand opposite each other on parallel platforms on either side of a river. The idea is to hit the other man with poontas sticks until he falls into the water. Poontas are small, sharp pointed sticks, made especially for throwing. Each time a combatant it hit three times, he takes a topple and there are five rounds to be battled out before the contest is decided.

CRITICISM

● 'Wargames aren't really my cup of tea to be honest — I'm not one for mindless violence. Looking at Beach-Head as only a game, it's not that bad — an awful lot of program has been squeezed into a 48K Spectrum for just one load. The only trouble is that it's a bit easy to complete and once completed the only incentive to play again is to get a high score. The two player game is quite fun, however, and there are lots of ways

you can play the game — no shortage of options here. The graphics, though a bit crude, work quite well. The end sequence is ridiculously easy once you've figured that your opponent won't move till you do. If you liked Beach Head then you'll like Beach-Head II.

● 'Another sizzling American game hits the Spectrum, the only trouble is that American games and Spectrums don't seem to mix very well. Quite a lot of the games which have made their way across the Atlantic (usually CBM 64) have fabulous graphics and sound which mask a pretty boring

game — Beach Head II is one such game. On the Commodore it was great with its speech, amazing animation and smooth graphics, but these have been lost in the transition from 64 to Spectrum leaving a pretty simple and boring game. If gunning down loads of men really is your cup o' tea then fine, take a look at this. If it's not then try something a little more intellectually stimulating.

● 'At last! US Gold kept us waiting for more than a year for

PANZA-DROME

Producer: Ariolasoft
Retail price: £7.95
Language: machine code
Author: RamJam Corporation

The Panzadrome is an island inhabited by robot tanks of varying levels of viciousness. The mission that's been foisted upon you is to destroy the Panzadrome. Each tank is remotely controlled from a central computer, from which it gets its power. This central computer is powered by a geothermal based energy source. Plasma vents are a central part of the power grid,



the follow-up to their Mega-Seller Beach Head. It's well worth the wait, though. Four screens, each in its own right a separate arcade game, make this much better than the last. I suppose most people will buy it because of the original, but as it stands it's a great game. The graphics in all stages are good, as is the playability. (My personal favourite of the four is Screen Three.) You really get your money's worth, give the variation in the game, so I suppose Beach Head II will be found in Christmas stockings up and down the land.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: definable
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2, Cursor

Keyboard play: responsive
Use of colour: some attribute clash, nothing remarkable
Graphics: some good animation
Sound: a tune, and some effects
Skill levels: 3

Screens: four
General rating: A lot of options crammed into one game; some may find the gameplay weak

Use of computer	85%
Graphics	79%
Playability	81%
Getting started	75%
Addictive qualities	75%
Value for money	71%
Overall	74%

and they have to be destroyed in order to knock out the computer. The computer is well aware of this weakness, and wherever you find a vent there is also a very hefty guardian force as well. Apart from the tanks, you have to reckon with heavily armed gun emplacements, which spit death at any unknown passer by. You are un known, so beware.

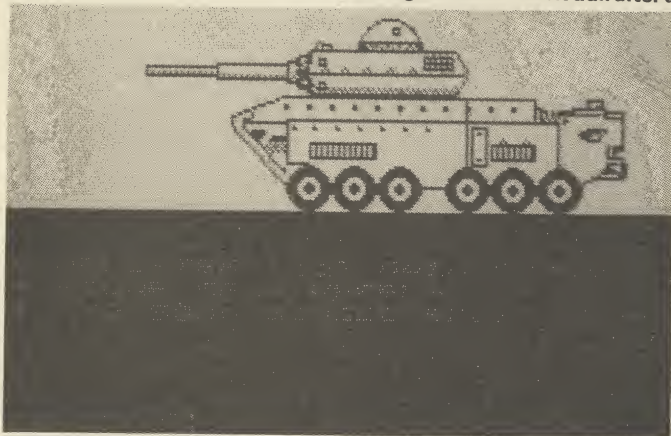
When you start, the tank that's allocated to you can't really be described as top notch. In fact it's positively sub standard, with a one-shot turret and stone wheels! Fortunately, factory depots are scattered around the island, each specialising in a different type of tank component. Originally placed there to make and repair the robotanks, it's possible for you to sneak in and collect whatever weapon system a factory makes.

Though the robot part stores

are not wise to your little suicide mission, and merrily upgrade your tank, the computer run tanks are well aware, and will do their best to blow you away. Three different types of weapon are available to you, though only one is supplied when you power up — a single shot turret cannon. Mortars and mines are definitely worth having, but they have to be collected from the appropriate factory.

A Polycrete™ module is well worth collecting. While it's possible to avoid the fire from the enemy tanks by moving quickly, both their shells and yours leave impassable craters in the ground if they hit the deck. With tanks constantly taking potshots

was a pleasant surprise. It's pretty good fun just as a hack round and blast the tanks game, but you soon realise that there's also a greater strategic depth within it. I like the idea of the game a great deal but I do feel it could have been a bit more competently executed. The movement of the tanks slows down horrendously once there's more than a few of them on screen, making retaliation near impossible. The graphics are very pretty and are nicely presented, though the actual tank sprite would not have suffered if it had been a bit larger. Panzadrome should appeal to quite a few people, though I found it a bit dull after a



at you it is quite easy to get permanently stuck between a couple of impassable craters. The polycrete module is like having Taylor Woodrow in the back of your tank. The P key lets forth a jet of a cement-like substance that fills in craters beautifully.

The Panzadrome itself is a 64-screen island — each screen flicks to the next when the edge boundary is reached. A scanner, consisting of an eight by eight grid, helps you navigate by highlighting the screen you are currently occupying. A short range scanner covers the screen you're on, showing the tanks, which you can see, and the mines, which you can't. Also shown on the status screen is the state of repair of any equipment you may have. If your tank takes too much punishment you can lose the use of peripheral equipment. Only one life is supplied, and if your shields run out a direct hit on your tank ends the game. Status bars depict shield level, plus other handy information like stock counts on the amount of mortars and mines left in your possession.

As you progress through the game and manage to total a few plasma vents, the enemy slowly gets aware of your designs, and the tanks and defences get more vicious still.

CRITICISM

● 'I'm not overkeen on military type games, but Panzadrome

while because of it's sporadic slowness. Worth checking out though.'

● 'Being temporarily joystickless when I reviewed this one at home, I found this game more difficult than it should have been because all the control keys were in the same row — I thought software houses gave that years ago! I've not no major grouches about Panzadrome: essentially it's a good game but it's spoilt a bit by a few things that wouldn't be difficult to alter. The graphics, with the exception of the rather too small tanks, are superlative, even casting shadows on the streets. The most aggravating aspect of the game, for me, was getting stuck in a narrow street between two craters when I hadn't got any Polycrete™, leaving me no option but to restart. Generally, a very good piece of software, but not quite good enough for me to rave over.'

● 'I liked Panzadrome. It's not a classic game, but the graphics are interesting and the gameplay is a bit different. You've got a large playing area to explore, and plenty of things to shoot at (and avoid). The tank graphics are perhaps a little crude, and things tend to slow down a bit when the screen's full, making your tank a bit sluggish when it comes to responding to orders. At times the game is really wicked — if you don't watch out it's easy to get trapped, and a fair bit of strategy is involved in

playing successfully. When you get the top-of-the-range tank, though, all the effort is worthwhile!'

COMMENTS

Control keys: CAPS LOCK/Z rotate left and right X/C forwards/backwards, V to fire
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2
Keyboard play: some people will find the key layout awkward
Use of colour: attractive scenario that's prettily presented

Graphics: blocky, but nicely detailed producing a good effect
Sound: neat rendition of Beethoven's 9th at start but nearly non-existent after that
Skill levels: 1
Screens: 64
General rating: A very good idea that is let down a bit by the execution

Use of computer	65%
Graphics	80%
Playability	72%
Getting started	75%
Addictive qualities	78%
Value for money	69%
Overall	77%

ENDURANCE

Producer: CRL
Retail price: £7.95
Language: machine code
Author: G Munday and B Wheelhouse

Endurance allows you to participate in Formula One motorbike racing without risk to life, limb or wallet. Avoiding any kind of arcade action, *Endurance* puts you in the position of team manager — rather like *Football Manager* of the racetracks really.

The racing team in your charge consists of two bikes and four riders, and you have to juggle with a variety of variables while your try to make your team successful. Pitstop skills are well worth practising, as keeping the bikes in good order is as important as your riders' racing skills. In the pits you can swap riders or service a bike ... Several things can go wrong with a bike: brake pads can wear, tyres can burst, fuel can run out and engines go out of tune.

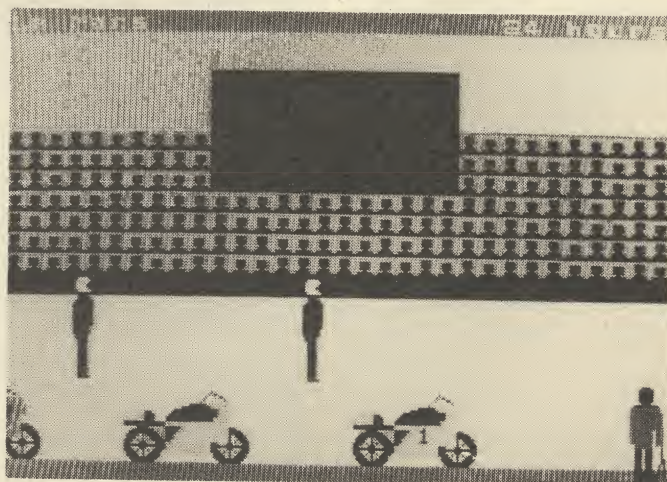
You can choose to compete in individual races, or take them

together as a world competition. When a rider wins, points are given to both the team and the rider as an individual. Four of the six races are fairly short, while two tracks are twenty four hour races, and take around an hour to complete in real time.

Up to six players are allowed to take part in one game, and five skill levels are available. Selections are made with the joystick controlling a pointer, using fire to select options. There's a choice of riders and bikes, and once chosen they can be renamed to make things a bit more personal. Then chassis and bike specification of each vehicle needs to be set in the pits by a mechanic. The first thing to do is tune the engine. Below the bike are three bar graphs, one for safety, one for power and another for miles per gallon. Using the arrow selector each rating can be boosted to fit your requirements. Strategy comes into play here, as an increase in one factor causes a decrease in the other two.

The handling of the bike then has to be set in a similar manner, but this time the different factors are speed, safety and wear. Tyre selection allows soft, medium or hard compound tyres to be fitted to the back and front wheels. Lastly, the team member to ride first is chosen.

Before a race the riders line up on the opposite side of the track



to their bikes, then the starter drops the flag and the riders leap onto their machines. Each lap is computer controlled and you see a view from the grandstand, watching the bikes whizz past. After every lap the positions of the bikes in the race is updated. The main scoreboard displays the first six places, showing the leader and the distance each of the next five riders is behind him. Along a smaller board above the main track the numbers of the first sixteen racers are shown. If any of the bikes on the course are having problems, then their numbers are highlighted in red.

Instructions can be issued to your riders on the completion of every lap by pressing the I key. In all, there are three options: Go Go Go, Ride normally, and Take it easy. If the fuel on one of your bikes runs out or a fault gets too bad to cope with, then an automatic pit stop is called by the computer.

When in the pits, you control a mechanic. By moving him along the body of the bike various options appear for the maintenance of the bike. The engine can be tuned, the wheels can be changed and the brakes can be repaired. These sections are operated in the same way as the start up screens, using histograms and pointers. Fuel can also be replenished and the riders can be changed — a rider's energy rating goes down, the longer he races.

When the bike has been returned to spick and span condition it returns to the track. The time for your pitcall is displayed and if you spent too long in the pits, then you can opt to quit the race.

CRITICISM

● 'Though initially seeming very tedious, badly programmed and on the whole, totally inept, I found that this game has a spark of addictivity once I gave it a go. It really brings out an urge to win in me. I don't know why, but even with the peeping and parping sounds and absolutely prehistoric graphics, I actually enjoyed *Endurance*. Real bike fans will probably enjoy the game even more. I wouldn't recommend anyone to run out and buy a copy now, now, now — but it's definitely worth taking a look at.'

● 'A game that allows me to strip a bike down without getting oil all over me mum's kitchen floor — great! The sound would be awful, if there was enough to be noticed and the graphics are poor and annoyingly slow, especially when in the pits. All the same, I found it difficult to stop playing this strategy game. As an arcade game it's a non starter but treated as a strategy game with the graphics and

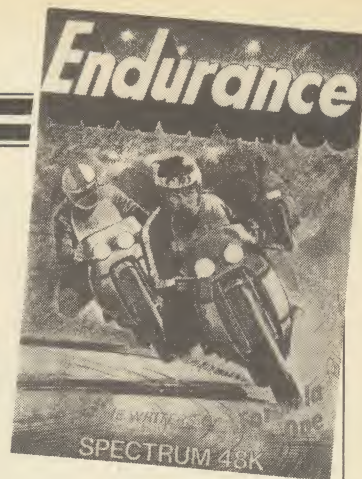
sound added to use up the spare memory, it's very addictive. I like it, and I'm going to play it until I win! So there.'

● 'Very much one for the sports management simulation fans — one of the best since *Football Manager*, and in many ways it's really quite similar. The tension it creates is quite fabulous. During one game, a championship, I was just 6 minutes from the end of the Le Mans 24 hour race when guess what? The power went off! I went nutty. The only thing against this game is the graphics — they're terrible. I really enjoyed this one, all the same. The five skill levels, the wide range of tracks and the choice of championship or single races mean this game will

last a long time. If you liked *Football Manager* for the strategic elements, you'll love *Endurance*.'

COMMENTS

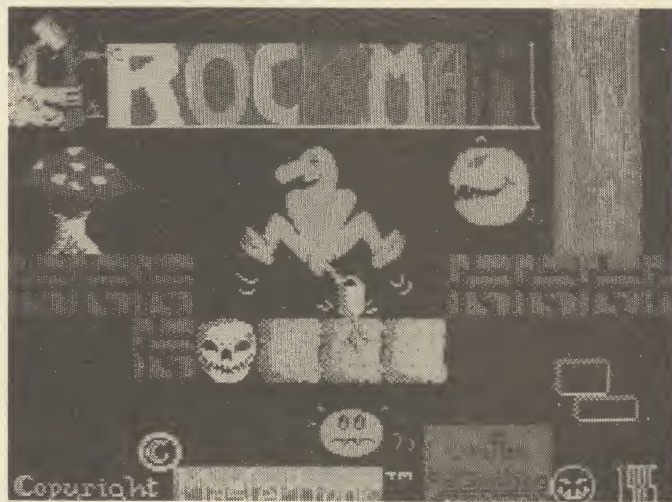
Control keys: definable
Joystick: Kempston
Keyboard play: no problems
Use of colour: poor
Graphics: simplistic to the point of crudity
Sound: quite a lot, but all very similar
Skill levels: 5
Screens: menus, the pits and grandstand view
General rating: Though not stunning in any way at all, it has a certain something



Use of computer	39%
Graphics	32%
Playability	67%
Getting started	69%
Addictive qualities	74%
Value for money	67%
Overall	69%

ROCKMAN

Producer: Mastertronic
Retail price: £1.99
Language: Machine Code
Author: Dean Carter, the smiling assassin



Rockman is an underdeveloped little Troglodyte whose main motivation in life is food. Rockman knows what he likes and his favourite food is Mushrooms in huge quantities. The mushrooms proliferate throughout the network of caves that Rockman lives in — a pretty idyllic lifestyle, all things considered, except for the smiling faces. Though of a jolly grimace these vaguely intelligent spritettes spell death for Troglodytes if they touch him. After all, smiling faces have to eat too, and they don't like mushrooms so Troglodytes have to do as munchies for the faces.

Though he lives in the stone age, Rockman does possess some form of primitive technology. He has a hammer. Bashing any of the rocks with his mallet causes it to instantly crumble or fall to the floor, depending on what was beneath it. If Troglodyte eats all the Mushrooms on one screen then he's instantly transported onto the next screen where another feast of mushrooms is laid before him, which he just has to eat.

Rockman's on-screen antics are represented as a side on 2D view. With spritely vigour he can run along, and drop off, the ledges of rocks that make up the majority of the maze. Also making a part of the caves interior are the vertical red zoom tubes which allow him to scamper up an down between levels. The mushrooms are large red fungi, and it's hard to see how Rockman fits them inside his

mouth — still, he gobbles them up as he runs over them.

Also part of the scenery are the totally inert marble ledges. They don't do a lot and there's not a lot you can do to them. These are usually placed around as barriers or ledges. Another component of the caves are the inanimate skulls, sitting innocently until Rockman is foolish enough to hop onto one, whereupon it's a case of instant dismissal.

The blocks of rock in the cave crumble beneath a mighty blow from a prehistoric hammer, unless the space below is empty, in which case the rock falls harmlessly to the next layer. The hammer works by pressing fire and if a block of rock is sitting in the direction Rockman is facing, he'll give a mighty swing and bring the hammer down. If a smiling face is below a rock when it falls to the floor, Rockman gets his revenge — it's splatted to oblivion. Two smiling faces wander the caverns and if one is killed, another materialises to take its place. The faces roam semi randomly but they do have a slight tendency to follow Rockman, a factor that can be used to Rockman's advantage on the later screens

when they have to be lured in the direction you want.

Though some people like to take time over their lunch, Rockman doesn't, and actually needs to consume all the mushrooms present on a screen within a time limit. If he's a good boy and eats them all up, bonus points are awarded according to how much time is left.

Upon starting a game you are asked for a password, or to press space. If you've previously completed five screens then a password will be known to you and it's possible to start from where you left off. Fives lives are given for Rockman to stuff himself silly, one being lost for every ill encounter with a cave nasty. Not eating lunch in the time given also incurs a nasty loss of life. Ho hum, just like Crash Towers at dinner time.

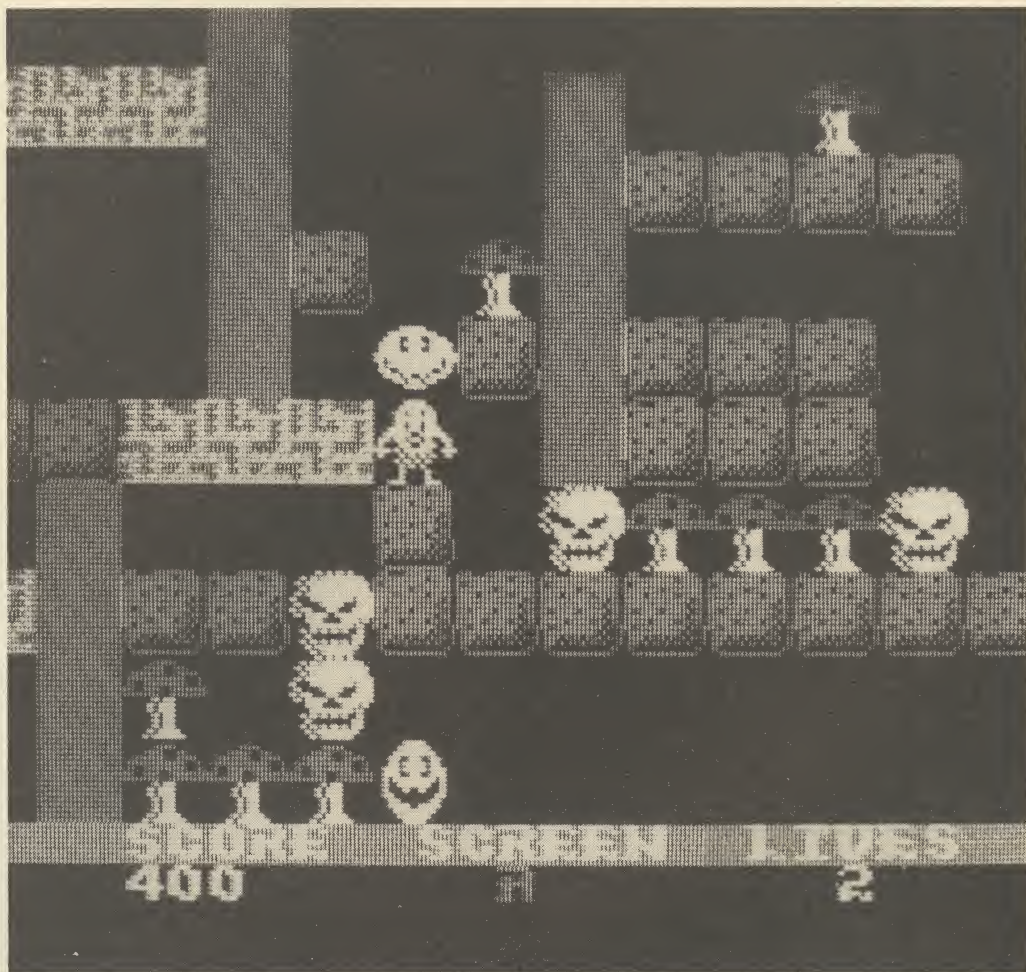
CRITICISM

● 'Rockman is yet another budget program from Mastertronic that impressed the hell out of me. Though lacking amazing graphics and state of

the art programming, Rockman is very playable indeed. There are enough screens to hold interest for a fair amount of time and the codeword system means there's no need to play the same old screens again and again. Rockman himself moves at an adequate pace and is very responsive indeed. Some of the bigger firms should really take a good hard look at some of Mastertronic's latest product as it really puts some of the latest megagames to shame.'

● 'This one seems to be very similar to a ruck of games we had in around issue 9, Hyper-action etc, and Rockman is about the average for that type of game — although it is a little out of date now. Graphically, this offers nothing new: the characters flicker too much and the colour is garish. I quite enjoyed playing this one for a while but found I got bored with it very quickly.'

● 'What a jolly little game! Lots of cute colourful graphics, that do flicker, but look good all the same. For 1.99, what we have is a nice platform game, that brings the old lateral thinking skills into play again. Some parts are rather amateurishly programmed, but all the same it's entertaining, and once you've bought all the really good progs you might be tempted to have a look at this; it's in no way shockingly good, but after all you can't expect perfection every time for 1.99.'



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COMMENTS

Control keys: definable
Joystick: Kempston, Cursor or Interface 2

Keyboard play: fast and pleasingly responsive

Use of colour: no attribute clash, though colour choice a bit garish

Graphics: blocky, and pleasantly animated though a mite bit flickery

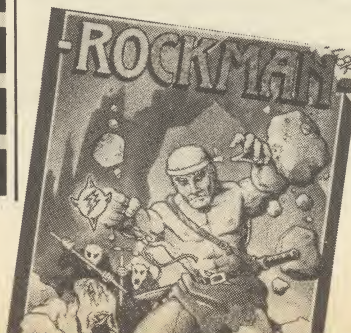
Sound: pleasant tune with some good game effects

Skill levels: 1

Screens: 20

General rating: Yet again, a worthwhile buy from Mastertronic

Use of computer	73%
Graphics	69%
Playability	68%
Getting started	73%
Addictive qualities	71%
Value for money	75%
Overall	69%



ROBOT MESSIAH

Producer: Alphabatim

Retail price: £7.95

Language: machine code

Author: Mike Smith and Christian Urqhart

The Android planet is one of the worst places to live if you happen to be a robot. The planet is ruled and dominated by a race of androids who, in a fit of synthesised evolution, managed to acquire the majority of human feelings and attributes such as ambition, determination and greed.

Thousands of robots working in the planet's mines are exploited by the Androids. Leading a hellish existence, the robots' life spans are very short and unpleasant. The robots are purposefully made to be of a docile nature and are too weak to contemplate rebellion. SID is a freak though. He is not as servile as his metallic brothers. One day, in the hope of escaping his grim fate, he wanders away from the mines into the deep cave net-

Spitfire



40

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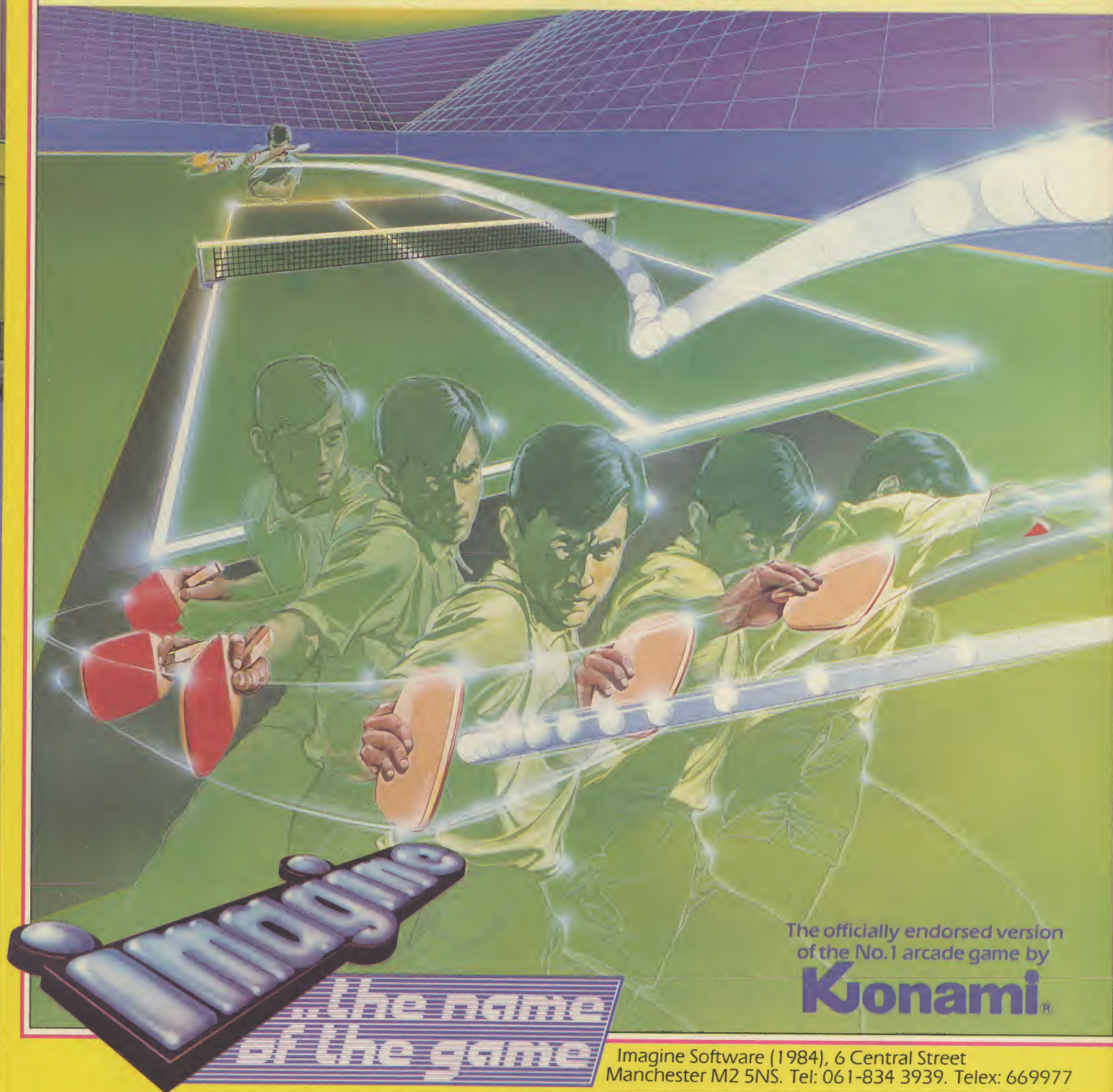


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work that weaves endlessly below the planetoid's surface.

Frightened of being discovered by the evil gnome patrols that keep the workers in step, SID eventually found a cold and particularly well-hidden cave. Socrates, a philosopher from among the ruling robots who had preached the unpopular view that all machines were created equal was hiding in this cave. For his beliefs, Socrates had been exiled.

Realising that SID might be able to liberate the robots and become their Messiah, Socrates instructs him: to achieve upgrade and become an Android in order to lead the worker robots to rebellion, SID must collect three envelopes, each containing one part of a computer program. The complete program must then be input to the Android's main computer. SID agrees to the philosopher's requests and sets off on his mission to liberate robotkind.

SID is a quite normal robot capable of quite a few useful tasks. For a start he can walk, and when it comes to getting over obstacles that block his way, a hefty robotic leap allows him to pass any barrier. The cave system is shown in a rather similar way to many adventures that have run before it, using the familiar flick screen method. Many harmful objects and crea-

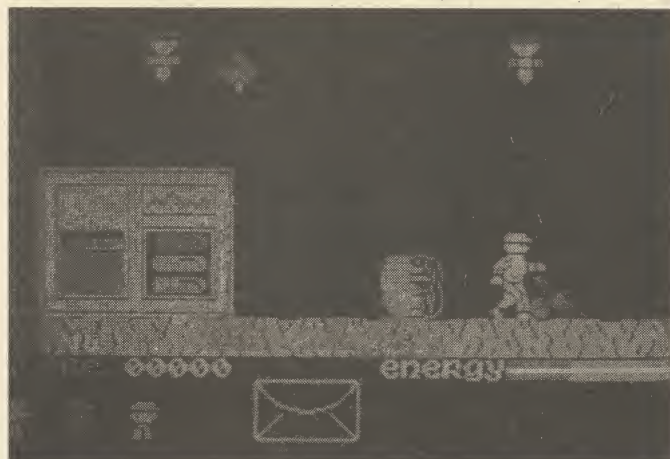
tures are to be found underground. Water isn't very healthy when your prime constituent is iron, for instance...

There are some useful things to be found, too. Advanced high protein energy reboosters perk up your energy bar — they come in the form of sticky buns and bits of fruit. As an energy based organism your energy bar gives a direct indication of how much life you have left. Three energy bars are given on your quest for robot liberation: lose them and the game ends and your brothers are condemned to eternal slavery.

To get the three envelopes, three sections of the labyrinth must be negotiated, starting with the caves. To leave the caves a weight must be found to place upon a pressure pad to allow entry to the next section. Moving SID over an object and pressing the pick up key adds objects to your status line — only three objects can be carried at once.

You aren't the only inhabitant of the caves. Strange energy-sapping beings float around, and finding a gun is a good move — though you'll need to collect a magazine of bullets as well before you can start blasting away. Twelve bullet magazines of ammo are dotted round the caves.

Once through to the second section SID finds himself in a buggy travelling down a long corridor towards the next part. The buggy is equipped with a shield that can be activated if any cave creatures drift towards it, though the shield saps ene-



rgy. A scanner at the top of the screen shows how far away the test centre is. Once through the corridor you're plonked within another room with a pressure pad. The only way out is through the door that the pad activates — without a weight you've got problems!

If you do get out of the room then SID is placed into the test centre. Here the envelopes must be found and the teleport activated to zap SID back into the first set of caves so the computer can be reprogrammed.

CRITICISM

● 'After a glut of similar programs I must admit to being a little bemused by Alphabatim's decision to release something so derivative as their launch

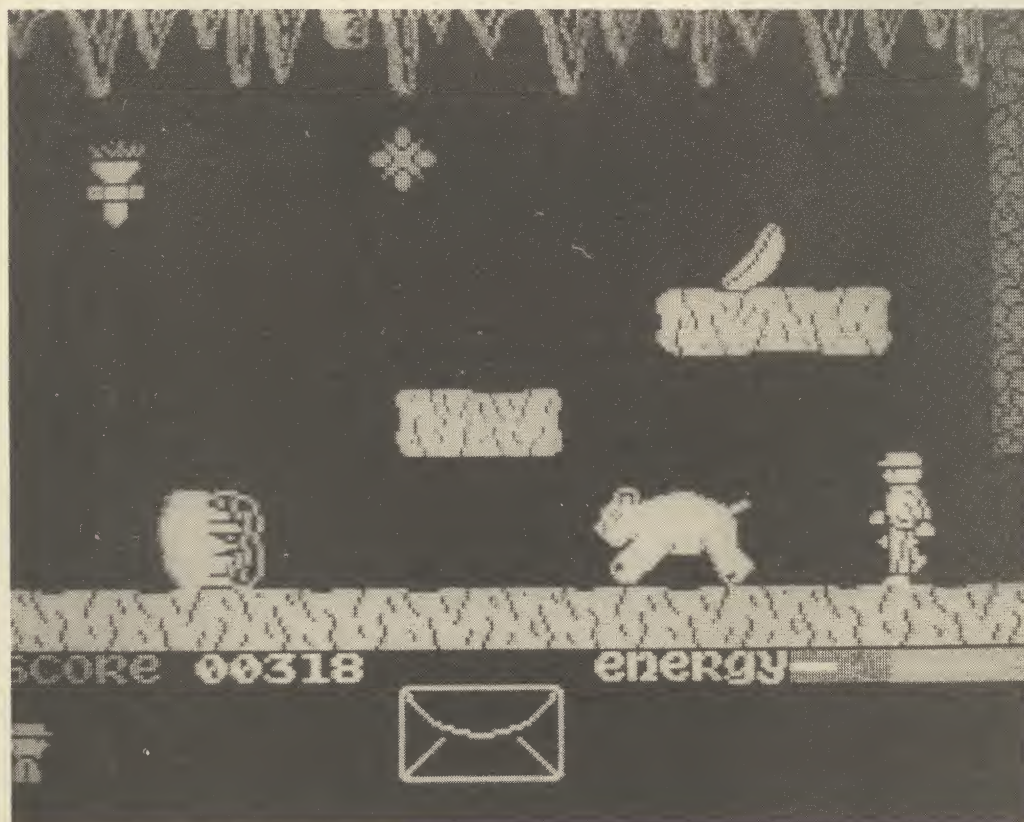
game. As an arcade adventure, Robot Messiah contains problems that are both logical and fun to solve, and the game compares well with the opposition. Things can slow down a bit when quite a few objects are on screen, and the action can get a bit ploddy at times. Graphically the game isn't all that exceptional — it's adequate apart from the animation on SID which is excellent. Overall not a bad game though there are so many of this sort already on the market and some are better: Robot Messiah may well be worth a look at if arcade adventures are your type of game.'

● 'Robot Messiah looked like it was really going to be something special, but unfortunately I found it rather boring and repetitive to play. The main character walks around really slowly, transforming any initial adventuring excitement into extreme frustration because it seems to take so long to get anywhere. The scenery is also pretty dull and samey making the game seem like a poor man's Nodes of Yesod. I do like a good arcade adventure, but this one failed to spark any real enthusiasm — when I played it I had a constant feeling of *deja vu*'.

● 'Robot Messiah, Alphabatim's entry into the software jungle reminded me a bit too much of the fabulous Nodes of Yesod. The game itself is very colourful and the movement is very smooth with lots of well animated baddies. The sound effects contain too much clicking — a good constant tune would have been better. The accuracy of the blocks is appalling: it's possible to stand at least a character space over the edge of a platform in mid air without falling to the ground. At first look a pleasing game, but after a few games you notice lots of problems with it.

COMMENTS

Control keys: N left, M right, S leap, A fire, X pick up



Joystick: Kempston, Cursor, Interface 2

Keyboard play: responds adequately

Use of colour: pretty, no attribute clash

Graphics: good animation, nice graphics but a bit repetitive

Sound: not a great deal

Skill levels: 1

Screens: 152

General rating: A passable arcade adventure, but nothing particularly special

Use of computer	80%
Graphics	76%
Playability	71%
Getting started	68%
Addictive qualities	69%
Value for money	70%
Overall	72%

capable of twenty five different moves, ranging from offensive to defensive and during combat the idea is to reduce Marcus' opponent's energy supply, which is indicated by a bar graph on the side of the emperor's box. Bash your opponent a bit, and his energy reading falls depending on the weapon he's been hit with and where he's been hit. Marcus has an energy bar and that's also prone to depletion from the attacker's advances. If the energy bar fills up, a big thumb looms out of the royal box and gives the thumbs down sign.

A weapon selection screen pops into view at the start of each contest, containing forty five different weapons, each with its own power and defence rating — though the program

have to be beaten in the arena before you get to the betting screen. Once you get to the bookies the points accumulated can be gambled, using the 1 key as up and Q as down to select the amount to be gambled. Press fire and then, using the same keys, you decide who to gamble on. If you win, then you double your money. Lose and the stake money becomes the bookie's. If all your money is lost then Marcus gets thrown back into the arena. Get 32,400 eagles and a Marcus gets his coveted Certificate of Freedom.

CRITICISM

● 'I was initially impressed when I clapped eyes on this program — the big figures fighting away with one another looked really good. It was only when I got down to playing it that I started to see the niggly glitches in the graphics — sometimes the men start climbing up the wall. The thumb which comes out when a player is defeated is pretty rotten — it's so-o-o-o slow and has about three frames of animation. Playing *Gladiator* is pretty tricky too; I'm sure the control method could be improved no end. As it stands, it's very confusing, even when you've played it a few times. Even so, it could be called a follow on from *Exploding Fist*, and if you like games of that genre then you could well like this.'

● 'It seems to be all gore and violence at the moment with *Domark*. I mean, with *Friday the Thirteenth* and now *Gladiator*. I must admit to getting a bit tired of fighting games. Though lacking a lot of the arcade appeal of other such programs, *Gladiator* does hold a great deal more depth. Being allowed to choose weapons before a match adds a great deal to the game. *Gladiator* isn't really hit material,

though if you do like this type of game then it really would be worth seeing, since the depth of play involved is far greater than in any of its rivals.'

● 'After *A View To A Kill* I wasn't expecting much from *Domark*, which is just as well after playing *Gladiator*. At first look *Gladiator* seems to be a very neat and realistic copy of the old gladiator fights, but when you finally get into the fight you realize that the game is totally *unplayable*. I found the game very confusing, and very unuserfriendly. Your gladiator has too many controls which are accessed in too hard a manner. With less controls which were easier to use, I would have given it a higher rating. *Gladiator* is trying to enter an area where *Exploding Fist* rules supreme. For me this comes nowhere near it.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: Player One: 1 to 5 up screen, Q to T down, A, D, G left, S, F right, C, Z, X, C, V fire. Player Two 6 to 0 up screen, Y to P down, J, L left, H, K ENTER right, B, N, M, S, B fire.

Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2

Keyboard play: unresponsive, and complicated

Use of colour: monochromatic, to avoid attribute clash

Graphics: adequate backdrops

Sound: a bit of white noise to indicate a hit

Skill levels: one, gets harder

Screens: five

General rating: a complicated fighting game which has a lot of depth

Use of computer	73%
Graphics	81%
Playability	72%
Getting started	65%
Addictive qualities	82%
Value for money	75%
Overall	77%

GLADIATOR

Producer: Domark

Retail price: £8.95

Language: machine code

Author: Mike Green

Beat 'em up's look like they're here to stay. Domark have just released one by the name of *Gladiator*. No prizes for guessing the what the scenario for this one is...

As a slave, Marcus was none too happy. Tired with a life of toil among the Roman fields, Marcus decides to try and battle for his freedom among the gladiators in the stadia of Rome. To buy his freedom, Marcus must win 180 times 180 eagles, a very high price indeed.

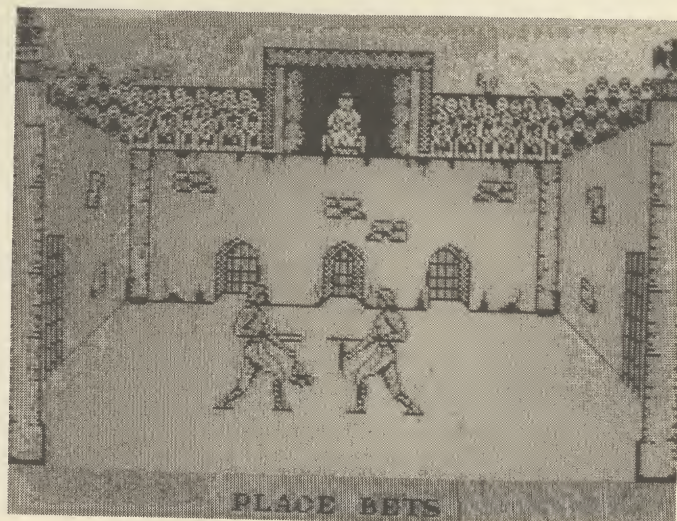
To get so much money you'll have to vanquish up to seventeen fighters and then take part in a gambling session, betting on the outcome of a two fighter fight. As you win fights, you are matched against more skillful opponents who come into the arena with better weapons. Both Marcus and his opponents are

doesn't tell you what they are. Arming Marcus is a process of trial and error to begin with and deciding which weapon is best plays quite an important part in the game. Marcus can use a weapon in each hand as well as a set of wrist knives.

After choosing the weapons, the gladiators move to the arena, where the action is viewed by the player from a spectator's eye view on the edge of the arena. The arena is three dimensional: the gladiators can move in and out of the screen as well as left and right. In the background you can see the other side of the arena, and the milling crowds shouting slogans to the fighters.

Once the fight starts, moves are made using a combination of fire button and directions. Three sets of moves are available: one using the directions only, another using the direction keys or joystick after fire has been pressed once and the third set is accessed after fire has been pressed twice.

At least fifteen opponents





CRASH BINDERS

INTERNATIONAL KARATE

Producer: System 3
Retail price: £6.50
Language: machine code
Author: The Sysem 3 team

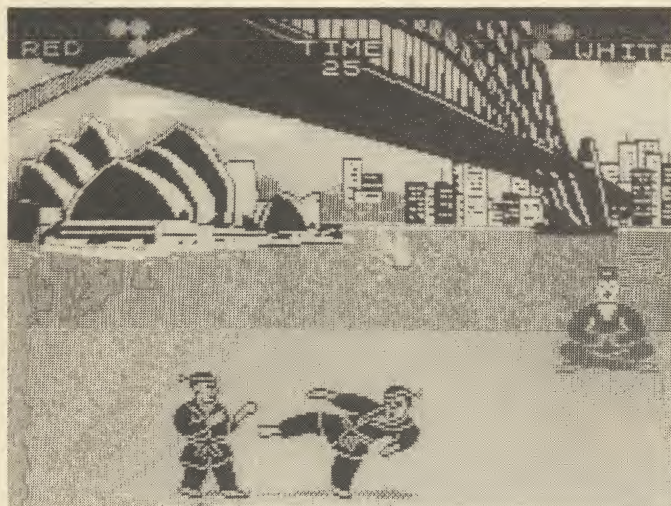
The flavour of the moment seems to have a definite bias towards the oriental. System 3's long awaited, and somewhat overdue Karate simulation finally joins the ranks of combat games, which are all the rage on the Spectrum just now.

International Karate is another beat em up fought against backdrops depicting famous cities around the world, rather than in an oriental setting. The game scenario itself is very simple - it's a battle between two Karate masters played over three rounds; the first to win two rounds wins that bout. The idea is to outscore your opponent in each round within the 30 second time limit. If you win, bonus points are awarded according to how much time remains on the clock at the moment of victory.

The game allows you to play

speech bubble above the judge's head. The battle then ensues and the players have to try to knock down their opponent. The judge bursts into speech again when one of the players achieves a 'knockout', announcing his decision as to whether a full or half point has been awarded. The first player to reach two points wins the round — and if neither combatant clocks up two points, the winner is the fighter with the most points. The player who's the first to win two out of the three bouts is then allowed to tackle a bonus screen.

The first bonus screen is a woodblock-kicking exercise where you have to try to break as many pieces of wood as possible, with points awarded according to the amount of firewood you create. The second bonus screen, tackled by the winner of the second round is a sort of dodge 'em/punch 'em screen. A variety of objects is thrown from either side of the screen and you have to destroy them by punching or kicking them into oblivion. Again, bonus points are collected according to the amount of damage you wreak.



either one or two players. If you're playing single player then the computer takes control of the opposition. As in such fighting games, there are a multitude of movements available — a total of sixteen punches and kicks — with which to terrify and generally damage your opponent. Moves are made using different combinations of key presses, using a total of nine keys for each player.

The competition is overseen by a judge, who monitors the skills of the combatants and starts each fight by shouting 'begin' in very clear speech — and in case you don't quite catch the command, the words are also printed on the screen in a

When the bonus screen stage is completed, the winner is transported to another part of the world where the battle resumes and you can find yourself scrapping away in Rio, New York, London and Sydney.

CRITICISM

● 'The blurb on the cassette cover says 'and you thought you'd seen a Karate game'. Unfortunately I have - it's called *Way of the Exploding Fist* and it's better than this. The animation on *International Karate* is a

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lot cruder than *Fist*, it takes up less frames than the latter and consequently looks rather flickery when compared directly. There are some glitches as well, like the 'wrap round' when a player gets killed near the edge of a screen - half his body appears on one side and half on the other. The gameplay is a bit awkward too - the multitude of keys makes the game very difficult to get into, but once you've got them sussed it's very easy to beat the computer opponent. *IK's* redeeming feature is the excellent speech - in my opinion the best I've heard: it's very clear and understandable. When it comes down to the nitty gritty - ie which Karate game is the best, then I must confess that *Fist* still comes out top. But if you're well into beat em ups, then you might want to add this one to your collection ...

● 'Yet another fighting simulation. I wasn't much of a fan of this type of game in the first place, and there's now so many of them ... I admit that some of them are fun for a while but they do get very boring when all you have to do is beat up your computer. This one is no different from the rest. The graphics are a bit below average for this type of game - I felt the characters were badly drawn and very jerky. Sound is fairly good: there is a nice title tune, spot effects during the game and some very good speech. As for gameplay I can't really say that it's compelling - I found that I didn't need much strategy to beat the computer. Not a bad offering really, considering the price I suppose, but I wasn't really grabbed by the game.'

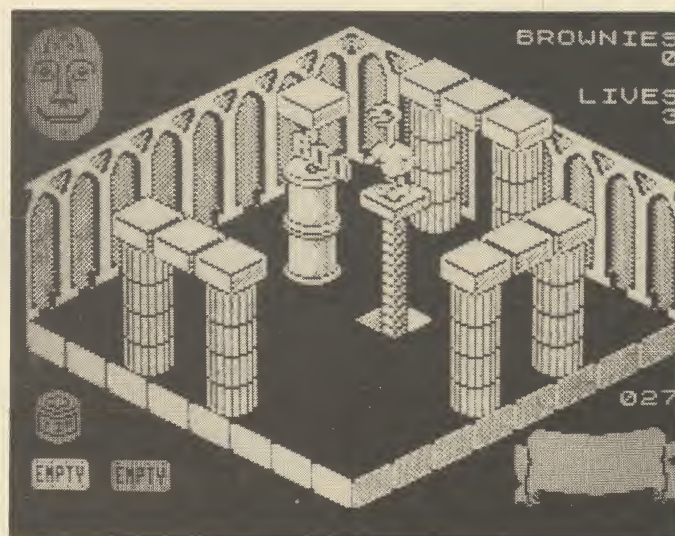
● 'Such a long wait - this game has been dogged by disaster and problems, and now arrives very late. Maybe a bit too late - lots of fighting games are already nestling in software collections already. *International Karate* has got a few nice touches, such as the speech, and the backdrops are quite pretty. Somehow, though, it doesn't come across as a polished game: four or five months ago, however, and it might have had a different reception ... One for fighting fans, really, to complete the collection.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: Player 1 W to jump, E lunge punch, D walk forward, C chest kick, X foot sweep, Z crouch punch, A walk backwards, Q back lunge punch, W and S flying kick, E and S front somersault, D and S front kick, C and S front side kick, X and S back crouch punch, A and S back side kick, A and S roundhouse, Q and S back somersault. Similar

arrangement for player two. 7 to quit game
Joystick: Ram Turbo
Keyboard play: could have been a lot better
Use of colour: reasonable
Graphics: nice backdrops, shame about the rather crude characters
Sound: excellent speech, and some good effects
Skill levels: gets harder!
Screens: 5 backdrops
General rating: disappointing overall, given the wait

Use of computer	75%
Graphics	71%
Playability	57%
Getting started	61%
Addictive qualities	67%
Value for money	69%
Overall	68%



SWEEVO'S WORLD

Preview the second ...

Okay, okay, so it's another preview of *Sweevo's World*. You wouldn't believe how close we were to having a full review this issue - a finished copy of the game arrived literally hours after our deadline, giving us enough time to write this intro and little else ...

... however, Gargoyle did give us an incomplete copy of the game to look at some time ago, so we thought we would at least give you a taste of what's to come - now you can't say fairer than that, can you?

As you may have noticed from the screen shots the star of the game, Sweevo, is rather a strange looking chap. The game itself is also something of an oddity since it features some of the weirdest, wackiest and original puzzles ever seen in an arcade adventure of this type.

Yes, *Sweevo's World* looks like Ultimate's *Knight Lore* and *Alien 8*, but any similarities stop there ...

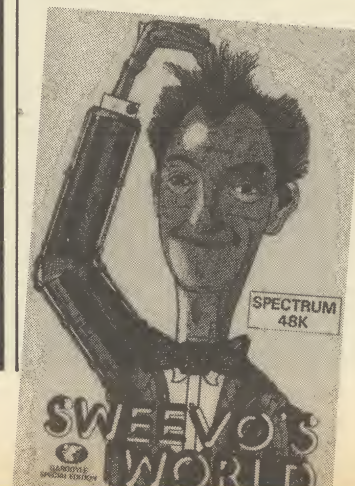
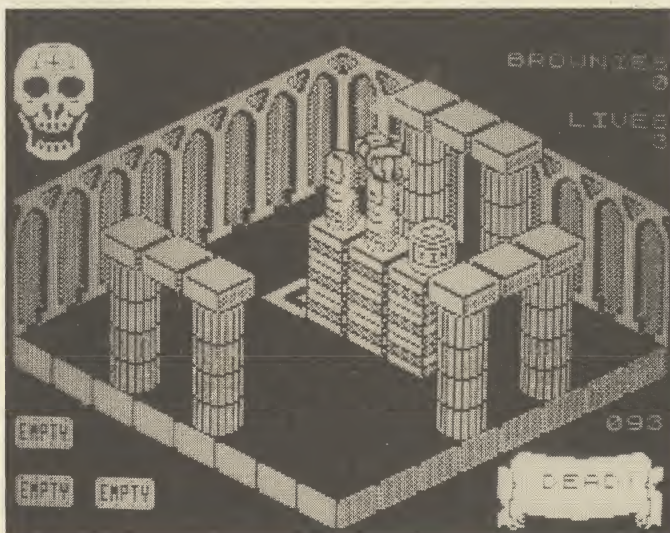
Robin mentioned in his preview last month that the game will consist of around 200 screens and several levels (the two Ultimate games only boast 128 screens, and most of those are empty). It turns out Gargoyle managed to cram in 184 highly detailed screens and have spread them over four inter-linked levels - Really Free, Lonesome Pine, Fingers and Apple Pie! Weird? - Wait 'til you see the screens! The first level, Really Free, has plenty of fruit, (and its fair share of nutcases) to avoid along with really devious traps and puzzles. In one room there is a tin that needs to be collected. It sits alone in the corner, appearing perfectly innocuous, so you decide to walk over and pick it up - only to find yourself permanently trapped behind a 'fence'

of fingers that suddenly popped up! Mean.

Meaner still is a room where you have to walk through a 'mazelet', a sort of very small maze, in order to exit the other side. But as you may expect, things are not so easy - suspended on glass tubes at points of most inconvenience along the way are three one-ton weights, which squash poor Sweevo should he knock away their fragile supports and not move out of the way quickly enough!

The finished game will have eight Widders to collect and four Goose Stepping Dictators and Horrible Little Girls to dispose of or avoid. This is easier said than done though, since both move very fast and are exceedingly aggressive. There will also be sixteen Brownies for the taking, thus gaining extra Brownie points, as well as eight Geese, who when shocked from behind, lay Golden Ergs which provide extra energy. Greg Follis of Gargoyle mentioned between 25 and 30 points are awarded for tidiness - whatever that means!

The many puzzles throughout the game appear very tough at first, but with a bit of logical thought they should prove fairly straightforward to solve. Greg Follis of Gargoyle feels that although the game is very difficult, it's certainly 'finishable'. Even so, there are many hours of absorbing and enjoyable play to be had in the meantime!





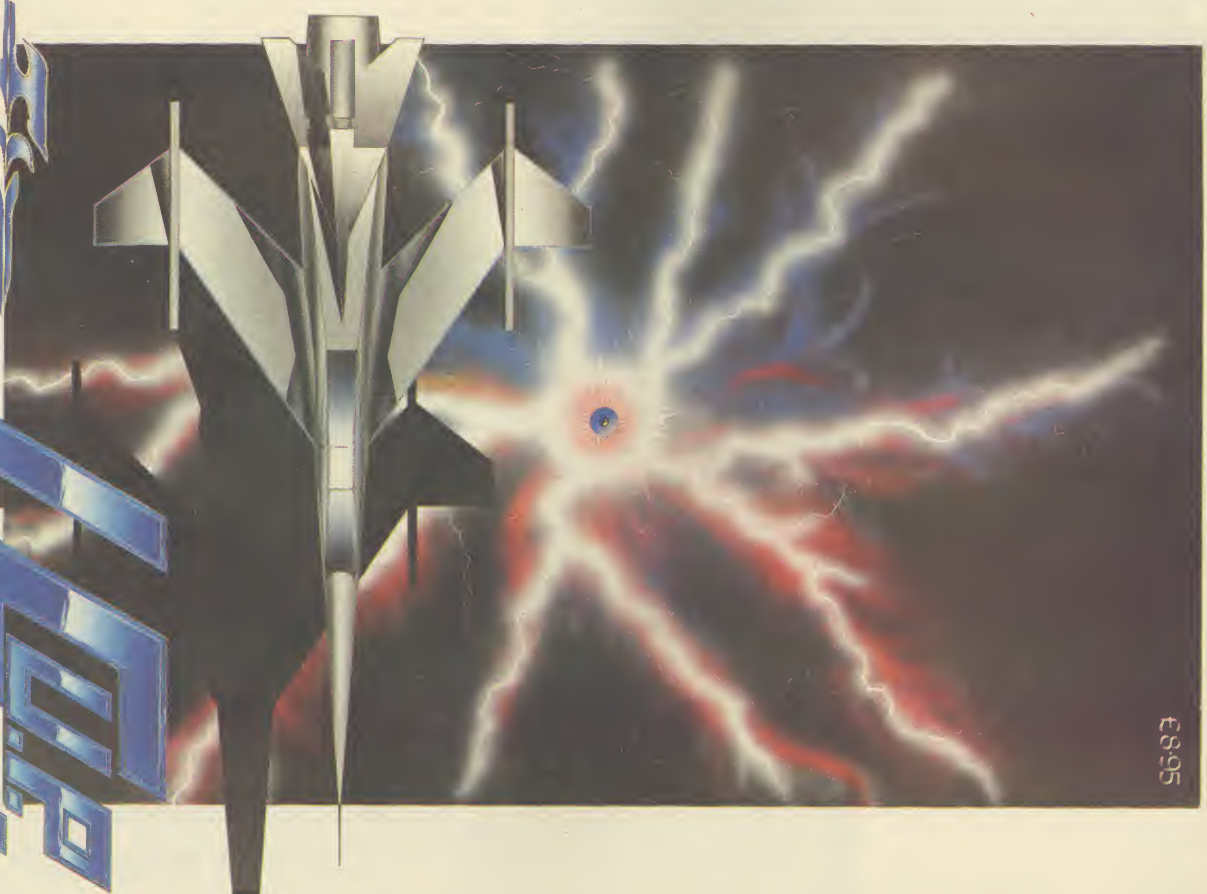
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SPELL- BOUND

Producer: Mastertronic
Retail price: £2.99
Language: machine code
Author: David Jones



As a continuation of his adventures in *Finders Keepers*, Magic Knight now reappears in a new Mastertronic release, *Spellbound*. Part of the new Mad Games range, *Spellbound* is a true graphic adventure.

Magic Knight's mentor and teacher, Gimbal the Wizard, has accidentally managed to bind you and seven other characters within a summon spell. The spell was intended to be an aid to Gimbal's quest for better tasting rice pudding. Due to a slight typographical error that arose when the incantations were translated from ancient English to slightly less ancient English, things went a little bit wrong. Now our hero is trapped within a strange and unfamiliar land with a bunch of people from different slices of history. Being the brave good guy among the collection of oddities it's down to Magic Knight to return the various peoples to their respective time/space zones. First on your list of major things to do is to release Gimbal from a self inflicted white out spell but, as in any good adventure, there's a number of smaller tasks to perform first.

Though *Spellbound* looks very similar to any run of the mill left/right and jump game, pressing fire soon shatters that illus-

ion. Based around a windowing system by the name of Window-vision, fire opens up the primary menu replete with a list of options available to Magic Knight. A pointer controlled by the up and down keys highlights various options as you move it about, and fire takes you to the sub menu for that option. For each option on the menu there's a corresponding button on the keyboard — thus avoiding any hassle for people who're a bit kack-handed when it comes to using the pointer.

When you change to a sub window it opens up over the main one and a pointer appears

available to you easy equals those within many text adventures. As you progress through the game the options and actions open to you change, allowing Magic Knight to take advantage of any new objects or powers he may have acquired — extra options are highlighted in white.

Apart from using the menu system, you can move Magic Knight around the screens with left, right and jump. Obviously Magic Knight has developed some pretty impressive leg muscles since his last game: jump causes him to take a real mega leap skywards.

Any object or character you may come across can be examined via the main menu. While a character is being examined, a small screen with a graphic of the character under scrutiny appears. Such details as strength, happiness, stamina, spell power and food level are detailed. You can even examine yourself; very handy, since being a brave knight expends strength quite a bit and if it reaches zero the games over. When it comes to examining object, a graphic of the object under scrutiny is displayed together with details on the four different attributes possessed by objects: weight, magic power, read and drop status. The read and drop information tell whether you can drop the object you've acquired or use the read function on it to glean information. The weight reading can be critical as well. The more the knight carries, the quicker his strength is sapped. If

Magic Knight is too weak then he won't be able to pick up heavy objects.

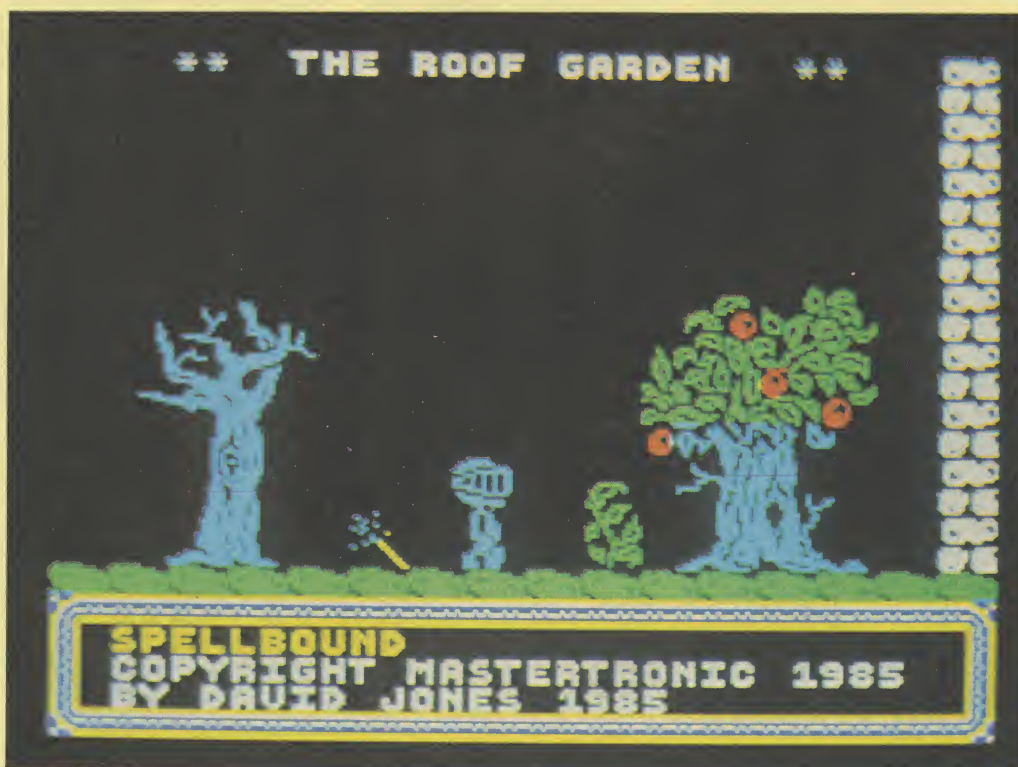
There's a large strategic element to the game. The other captives of the summon spell wander about in a bit of a daze and need looking after. You need to command characters to do things for their own good, and you have to get hold of the wand of command before the option which allows you to tell people what to do appears on your menu. Since the characters don't have the sense to fend for themselves, it's up to you to tell them to go away, eat, drink, and be happy.

If your fellow captives aren't kept in good health they may well die . . . The characters also have to be kept happy or it's likely they get in a bit of a sulk and be loathe to obey any commands that may be issued to them. Other people may well be in possession of objects you need but understandably they like to keep hold of any thing they've got. Command a character to go to sleep and anything they have can be easily pilfered. When a character is asleep it's also possible to give them something they wouldn't normally accept.

The domain in which the spell of summoning has trapped the cast of characters is split into seven floors, each spanning around seven or eight screens. To travel between floors the Knight has to use the lift found at the extreme left hand side of each floor.

Some objects can be found which can't actually be used —

on the sub directory. Using this system, the amount of options





they do offer clues, however, and the clue they contain can usually be liberated with the read function. A few totally useless, though amusing, objects litter the place as well. Upon starting, Magic Knight's only possession is an advert: read this and you're informed that David Jones created *Spellbound* and suggests going out and buying *Finders Keepers*.

Another addition to the Knight's worries is that there's only 48 hours to complete his task. Oh dear. Better get going ...

CRITICISM

● 'I'm always a bit cynical of software houses' claims to produce true graphical adventures but it seems that Mastertronic have actually come up with the goods. *Finders Keepers* was excellent but *Spellbound* is superlative. Windowvision is about the best selection method for using and interacting with objects and characters I've seen yet. It blows away both *Frankie* and *Shadowfire* making them both seem awkward and outdated. Graphically, the game is well above average: the movement of Magic Knight as he athletically leaps about is great. Convincing gravity too. Overall, about the best game of it's type on the Spectrum to date. Even if it were priced around the ten pound mark I'd still recommend it as a bargain but for £2.99 you'd be MAD not to buy it!

● 'Finders Keepers was Mastertronic's best game until now. David Jones has improved on the features in *Finders Keepers* and has come up with a first rate game. The graphics are generally good, but not some of the best around. What makes this game is the presentation. It's very easy to play without actually reading

the instructions and subsequently it doesn't take long before you are addicted. The menus that appear make the game easy to understand and they cut out the need for mega quick reactions which other arcade adventures depend on. If you've got £2.99 to spare then get this, you won't regret it!

● 'I My blue knight materialised: 'What now?' I cried! But then as I started bouncing all over the millions of screens, I was really getting into the feel of it; when I pulled myself away from it, I could easily say I was well and truly hooked. Fab sound and mega-brill windowing with the odd bit of great graphics gave me the feeling that this was going to be a smash! And when they told me that it was only £2.99 I really freaked out! Next time you find yourself with three quid, this is something you must get.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: A/Z up,down N/M left, right and space for fire
Joystick: Kempston
Keyboard play: very responsive
Use of colour: a bit of attribute clash, but hardly noticeable.
Very good
Graphics: Big, bold and detailed
Sound: Not a lot but what it does do is good
Skill levels: 1
Screens: 50
General rating: An outstanding game, especially for the money

Use of computer	96%
Graphics	89%
Playability	91%
Getting started	92%
Addictive qualities	89%
Value for money	98%
Overall	95%

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SABOTEUR

Producer: Durrell

Retail price: £8.95

Language: machine code

Author: Clive Townsend

As a gun for hire you've been hired to liberate a computer disk held within a high security fortress cunningly disguised as a warehouse. The disk holds the names of a number of rebel leaders and you're up against the clock. The idea is to find a bomb, hidden somewhere within the complex, get the disk and leave the bomb behind, ticking down to detonation. All this before the time limit expires and the information stored on the disk is sent to outlying terminals. Being a sensible sort of chap, you want to escape and there's a helicopter lurking on the warehouse roof, just waiting to be stolen.

The trouble is that the headquarters are heavily guarded by a number of armed guards and watchdogs as well as automatic defence systems which monitor your position in a room and then start zapping you with a laser. Your mission starts in a rubber dinghy moored just off a small pier leading to one of the warehouse entrances. Clad totally in SAS attire, black jumpsuit and bootpolish all over your face, you are initially equipped with a throwing star. As you wander through the security complex various other weapons can be found, picked up and used — each weapon can be used once only, but can be aimed at your target. Trained to a very high degree in various martial arts, you can also partake in a bit of physical baddie bashing rather than just lobbing the odd throwing star or brick about. You have a choice too: a killer punch or a ninja style dropkick are both equally deadly to any guards you may find.

The security complex is split among three different sections. The first is the warehouse front, containing the helicopter and primary defence force. If you get down into the sewers then you can link up to the underground train taking you into the first part of the computer centre. From here the second underground train has to be found to get you into the second computer centre. This is where the disk

and bomb are held. Once the disk has been rescued and the bomb primed a countdown starts showing the remaining time in which to reach the helicopter. A quick dash back through the sewers and train systems is required unless you like having dead mercenary smeared all over the walls.

Whilst bashing your way through various adversaries your progress is charted via two screens. The main screen shows a sideview of the room you're in. Your saboteur is about a quarter of the screen high and sproings and cavorts about in full animation. As well as running and fighting he can also perform a nifty tuck jump for bouncing over chasms and gaps. Using the ladders, platforms or steps provided, your hero travels around the complex of colour

coded levels.

The bottom quarter of the screen is used to display your status. Only one object can be held at a time, the object you're holding appearing in a window on the left hand corner of the status area, while objects close by and available for collection are shown in the window to the right side of this screen. Pressing fire uses the object within your grasp, or if another object is within reach it'll be transferred into your possession.

An energy bar along the bottom of the screen shows how your energy level is faring. Your life force is sapped by contact with fighting guards, who fire rubber bullets, guard dogs, which bite, and the laser defence system which is generally bad for your health. Standing about doing nothing for a while, how-

ever, allows ebbing energy force to return.

The game isn't played for points — what self respecting mercenary works for points? Money's the name of the game, and a paymeter clocks up a few hundred dollars each time you do for a guard. The big money is only picked up for collecting the disk in the time limit, planting the bomb, and escaping. The programmer's obviously a dog lover, though. There's no money in killing dogs — "so why bother?" the inlay reminds you.

CRITICISM

- 'Though bearing some initial resemblance to Impossible Mission, Saboteur holds a lot more



DURRELL



quite fun to play but what really put Saboteur up in my esteem was its sheer playability. Graphically the main sprite is a bit similar to the one in Impossible Mission but his range of movement is far greater. Overall the best release yet from Durrell and one of the better releases for the Spectrum this year.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: definable
Joystick: Kempston, Interface II
Keyboard play: extremely responsive, adds to the excitement
Use of colour: mostly monochromatic, but still effective
Graphics: lovely animation, though backgrounds could do with some more detail
Sound: pretty neat two channel tune once loaded, and effective white noise during the game
Skill levels: 9
Screens: 118
General rating: very imaginative: deserves star status

hero/spy just like *Spy vs Spy* and when you walk you crouch down just as if you were an intruder. The overall game is very addictive due to the variety of routes you have to take on the higher levels. Great use is made of colour — the characters are huge, with no attribute problems at all. One thing that made me laugh was the so called 'underground train' it really

does look like a brilliant picture of a holiday caravan. I hope Durrell gets a CRASH Smash for this 'cos it certainly deserves it.'

● 'Durrell Software really have pulled their act together this year. After a couple of years of mundane releases they're now producing classics like Saboteur. The game concept is fairly original, and as such the game is

Use of computer	84%
Graphics	92%
Playability	92%
Getting started	91%
Addictive qualities	94%
Value for money	92%
Overall	93%



upon further inspection. The game is absolutely great, it's like playing a part in a Bond movie. Maybe this is the sort of game that should have been used by Domark. Level one is quite easily solved, given a bit of time and thought, but there are nine different levels each subtly harder than the last. The animation of the man is great and he's very responsive indeed. Overall a this deserves to be a hit and should have pride of place on many a Spectrum users shelf.'

● 'After *Critical Mass* I was expecting great things from Durrell and they've certainly come up with the goods. *Saboteur* must be one of the most original games of '85. The drawing point of this type of game is that it puts you in the shoes of a





ROLLER COASTER

Producer: Elite
Retail price: £6.95
Language: machine code
Author: S Brocklehurst

Roller Coaster from Elite, is a fun fair simulation. Playing a punter, the idea is to collect all the cash left around the place during the day by the milling masses. The money is placed in the most awkward and precarious of perches and to get at it, various bits of active fairground machinery has to be negotiated. The background is that of typical American theme park with side-shows, palm trees, buildings and candy stores. These are located along the bottom of the playing screen while the amusements, usually, are a bit more skyrise.

Apart from a giant log flume, mini bumper cars and ferris wheel type rides, you'll also come across numerous waltzers scattered around the park. Made up of a number of separate cars that aren't connected in any way, they spin around the screen in weird sinusoidal patterns and yet retain their shape as a waltzer. Another attraction is the funhouse, a building full of platforms which cycle round, contorting and twisting while bouncing your little man along different paths.

Your character can travel and ride on any of the attractions he may find, by just jumping on. There's no need to pay! Since he's an athletic little chap, he's able to walk, run and jump, and can hitch a ride by hopping on at the right moment. Though looking big and butch with his ten gallon hat, our little hero is not invulnerable. Doing silly things like leaping of unreasonably high buildings or jumping into water takes away one of the ten lives supplied. If he is in imminent mortal peril, a little bit of zip can be added to his step by holding down M as well as a direction key. This near doubles the little sprite's pace and can be handy when attempting leaps over large gaps.

The money around the fair is represented by small blue objects that look nothing at all like money, really. Jumping through a square piece of money lets loose a satisfying squeak, and

boosts the figure in the little box at the bottom of the screen which displays the money collected so far.

There are three major rides around the sixty screen fair, all of them sort of rollercoasters. The first is on the screen to the right the start location, and is an olde worlde log flume. One of the others is a gold mine and is a cave trip completes the trio. Any attempt to run up an down the track of one of the big rides is deadly, so it's best to wait for the roller coaster carriage to come along, and leap into it. As you zoom along in the car, you pass under money, hanging tantalisingly in the sky. Careful timing is needed if you're to jump up, collect the loot and land safely back in the car.

As you travel throughout the fair the different screens flick into view as the central spritette moves off the edge of the current screen — as in so many other arcade adventures. Collect all the money and you've completed the game, but there's no need to be so avaricious — you could just scamper around and explore, having fun on the rides.

CRITICISM

'I thought I'd seen all there was and could ever be in the form of platform games after Dynamite Dan but I've been proved wrong again. Graphically, Roller Coas-

ter is very good: your man and the various rides are very well drawn and animated, and the backgrounds are very colourful — which leads to a bit of attribute clash, but nothing too glaring. Controlling your bloke is very easy; I liked the idea of the 'run' key, as this helps you get out of trouble. Generally I enjoyed playing this game as it is different from the usual type of platform game.'

'Rollercoaster was not written by the usual Elite team, and it shows. Not taking Elite's usual 'Every Game a Mega Game' attitude, the author has turned out an enjoyable and very impressive product. Though fundamentally just an arcade adventure platform game there are so many clever extras added it makes the whole thing seem almost original. Looking at static shots in this review, Rollercoaster may not look all that impressive, but when you see the different objects move it takes on a whole new dimension. I really like Rollercoaster and it one of the most deserving titles yet to appear from Elite. It's what a game should be, just totally unpretentious and fun to play.'

'This game is brill! No longer do we poor country bumpkins have to wait till May for the fair: Roller Coaster brings all the fun of the it into your living room! Wonderful graphics, terrific use of

colour, and amazing addictive qualities — it's just a great game. Big wheels, cafes, bumper cars and log flumes are all found in abundance on the many screens of this, the best from Elite for a long time. It owes a little, in places to the legendary *Manic Miner*, in that here and there the old lateral thinking skills come in handy. All it needs now is an automatic, free candy-floss vendor!

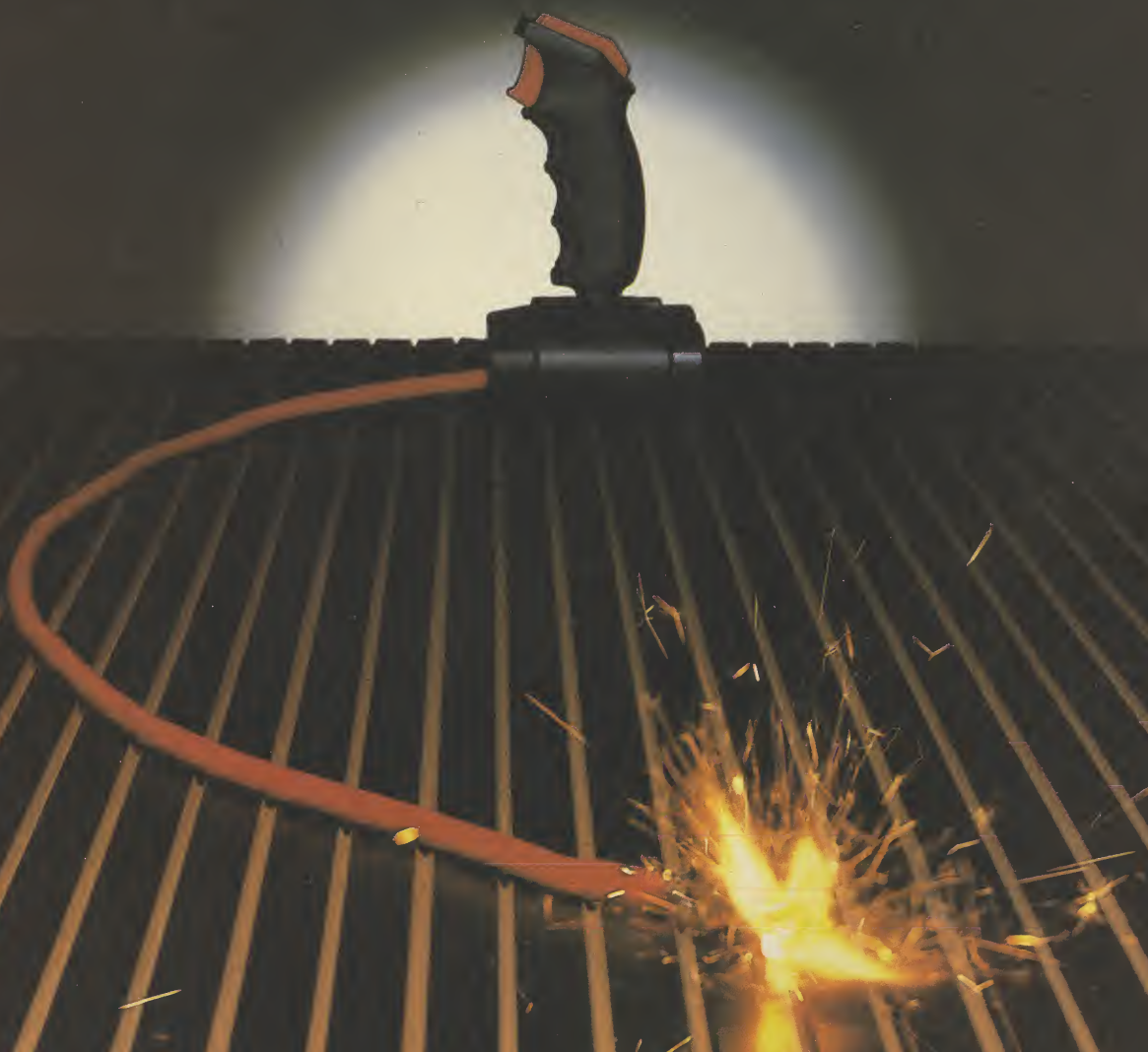
COMMENTS

Control keys: O left, P right, M run faster, CAPS SHIFT to jump
Joystick: N/A
Keyboard play: responsive
Use of colour: neatly done, but a few attribute problems
Graphics: some very cunning animation on the rides, neat
Sound: jolly tune to start with, and good effects
Skill levels: one
Screens: 60
General rating: a different kind of platform game altogether. A great little game

Use of computer	87%
Graphics	88%
Playability	92%
Getting started	93%
Addictive qualities	93%
Value for money	90%
Overall	94%



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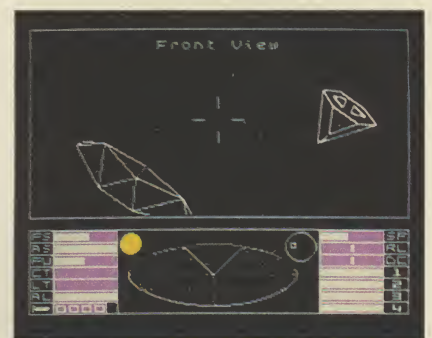
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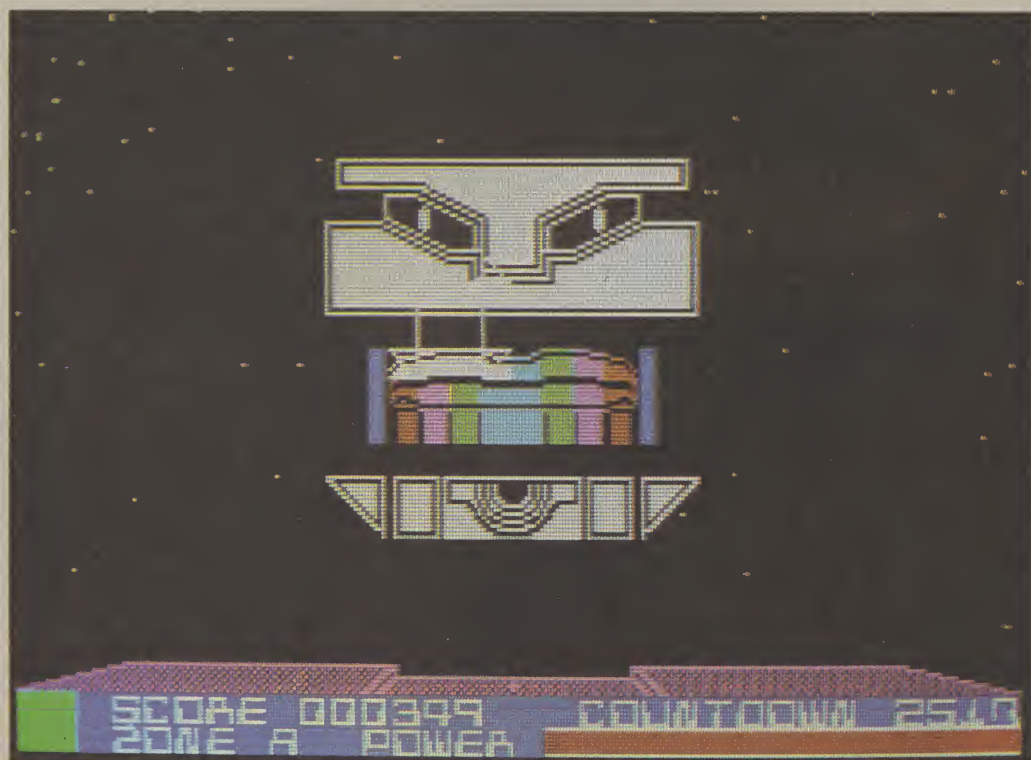
Producer: Insight
Retail price: £7.95
Language: machine code
Author: Mike Follin

The scenario that lies behind the second game from Insight bears more than a passing resemblance to Tron. Tron the film, that it, not Tron the game. You have been transported to a wierd 'sub-spatial' dimension, and find yourself inside a computer at the helm of a fighting machine equipped with an energy shield and the obligatory Plasma Blasters.

Vectron is a game split into four sections. The action begins in a maze, displayed on the screen using vector graphics from the viewpoint of the pilot of the ship — in a similar way to **Buggy Blast**. You are at the controls of a craft that is incapable of stopping and moves around at a constant and very fast speed. As you approach the end of a corridor in the maze, it's necessary to change direction very rapidly to avoid an energy-sapping collision. Up and down move a sight vertically over the screen while left and right govern the way your craft shifts at a junction as well as moving the sight horizontally. The laser, or plasma blaster, fires a pulse towards the centre of the gunsight and delivers a burst of energy that'll zonk any enemies in view.

To clear the first section, all enemy craft must be destroyed. The maze is patrolled by sinister Randomizers — sort of inverted U shape craft that patrol the corridors. The randomizers tend to inhabit the border areas of the maze, flying around the edge section enclosing the maze. In the inner reaches of the maze lurk the fireball spitting tanks. Unlike the randomizers, they can shoot at you, though if you approach them from behind they'll be unable to swivel their turret fast enough to total you.

While you're whizzing about, if you wish to see where the enemy craft are, a stab at the bottom row of keys calls up a full screen representation of the maze. Displayed with character blocks of colour, the normal screen display still functions in



the background and you can plan your route on the head-up map while continuing to drive through the maze. Upon the enlarged map your ship is shown as a white attribute square, randomizers are red, and tanks appear as magenta blocks.

Only one life is supplied, and your craft begins with a limited amount of energy. Bashing into

walls or enemy craft depletes your energy status drastically. Extra energy, displayed as cyan squares on the map, is available. Unlike the enemy they stay stationary and to collect the life force you must shoot them. If, by accident, you fly over an energy globe, the globe disappears and you'll be a bit nearer to death.

Once the baddies in the maze have been zapped, you have to

return your ship to the portal located in the middle of the maze. As you approach it, a sort of stargate whizzes into view and zaps you into the second screen. Here you have to blast a the Rom Robot's eyes with the laser as they flash. The robot, superimposed upon a starfield, spits globules of death at your spaceship. The energy shield remaining from the first screen

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is carried forward but the globes fired by the robot deplete it badly.

During the second phase, the ship's map computer is destroyed and when you return to the main maze for phase three of the game you're on your own, mapless. The idea is to reach the warp in the bottom right hand corner of the maze, through which you can make good your escape. The trouble is that the ship is placed randomly within the maze and some keen navigational skills are needed to suss out where you are. Two randomizers fly around the maze, just to make life more complicated.

The last screen is the escape section, displaying a rear view as you try to shoot the pursuing Randomizers and Tanks that are thrown at you while to try to run away. Zap them and you're free, fail and it's back to the title screen.

As well as your energy limitation, there is also a limited amount of time for your escape attempt: the time remaining is constantly shown on a countdown timer on the bottom left of the screen, and you'd better make good your escape if you want to fly again.

CRITICISM

● 'Vectron is just about one of the best games I've seen for the Spectrum for eons. It really is a classic. Even the first screen alone would have made Vectron a classic for me but there are four very different sheets, each presenting a considerable challenge. The graphics are exceptional, the speed they move at really amazed me. Recognizers move in a truly outstanding way, keeping definition however close they get to you. Using the attribute file to overlay a map of the maze was an inspired idea. Mike Follin and Insight should go a long way with such a high standard of product.'

● 'If you want a first class Tron game-of-the-film then look no

further than this. Although diverging slightly from the main storyline of the classic computer film Vectron has many of its elements, like the baddies and the maze sequence. The sheer speed of the program is well impressive and the 3D graphics are THE best I've ever seen. Vectron is pretty hard, but is that sort of game which keeps you coming back for more. A real classic which should definitely appear at the bottom of your Christmas stocking.'

● 'To begin with I wasn't all that keen on this game, but after a few hours of practise I really started to get into it. My only gripe, apart from the initial difficulty of the game, is the fact that there isn't a high score table or anything similar to tell you how close you've got to the end of the game. The use of graphics is very good, as is the use of sound — the tune is excellent. I greatly enjoyed playing Vectron, although I'm not sure it would offer much to the games player who likes to use his brains as well as his quick reactions. A first-rate shoot em up, though.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: definable
Joystick: Sinclair, Kempston, Cursor
Keyboard play: very responsive
Use of colour: excellent
Graphics: incredibly fast, and cunning
Sound: fab — great when amplified
Skill levels: gets harder as you go
Screens: four different sections to the game
General rating: A brilliant arcade shoot em up

Use of computer	93%
Graphics	93%
Playability	92%
Getting started	85%
Additive qualities	94%
Value for money	91%
Overall	92%

Reviews

SCREEN-PLAY

Producer: Macmillan Software

Memory required: 48K

Retail price: £8.95

Author: Pippa Lewis

I've been handed this piece of software to review because I'm supposed to be an expert, having spent much of my pre-CRASH time as a film cameraman and TV film editor. Whether this really qualifies me is another matter ...!

Screenplay is described as a means of creating your own film or TV programme on a computer. The package comes as a cassette with two programs on it and a booklet which describes some film techniques and has a section telling you how to use the software. Oddly, it doesn't really explain what the end result is going to be, although it does tell you that you can save your programmes on video — if you have a video recorder.

The 26-page booklet is the obvious, indeed only, starting place. The first 16 pages are broken up into general chapters on the subject. **How film works** describes very briefly the technical history of film, showing 'flicker toys' and 'flicker books'. It attempts to show how moving images are created by revealing lots of still shots, each action slightly advanced on the last. **How the camera works** explains the basic mechanism of a film camera, what photographic film is, camera shutters, lenses and film paths. **Film tricks** explains such devices as fades, dissolves, front projection, mattes, double exposures and the like. This is followed by **How TV works**, a quick run through of the electronic process and camera, which runs neatly into **TV tricks**, where mixes, double shots, digital machine effects, character generators and Chroma key are explained.

Making a film or TV programme outlines the roles of the producer, script, wardrobe and so on, and simply explains the function of animation, sound tracks and editing. This is followed by a section on cell animation, and then we're into **Using the software**.

So far so good. The booklet is not a handbook on film making, and its explanations are of the simplest kind, accompanied by useful illustrations. I suppose all of this could awaken someone's interest sufficiently to go into the subject in more detail but of itself it barely scratches the surface. Using the software however, is less successful in its presentation — but first let's look at the computer program.

Screenplay is icon-driven. A main menu presents seven

icons, **load**, **save**, **wordshot**, **soundtrack**, **action**, **screenshot** and **Take 1**. Load and save speak for themselves — a vital function since everything you do must be saved for combining with other elements. All the other options present sub-menu icons. **Wordshot** is the storyboard and dialogue department. Text can be written in normal or italic mode, in several directions across the screen and in a range of ink and paper colours. Double sized letters may be used. One icon allows rubbing out of a screen, and other work may be loaded in or saved out.

Soundtrack is a music editor. Films rely heavily on sound effects (FX), but there's no provision for that, and the Spectrum isn't exactly the best beast for effects. Notes may be entered, heard or rubbed out as well as saved. Other music pieces may be loaded in for adding to them or altering.

Action is a character generator and editor, which allows you to build up figures or objects, invert them, mirror or rotate them and two-frame animate them. Icons are used for all the actions, with a grid being drawn in the display area and the cursor keys used to fill in the character grid. Black or white (rubs out pixels) is toggled on or off with the zero key. Again, ink and paper colours may be selected, and everything saved or earlier work loaded in.

Screenshot is another graphics generator/editor, allowing the creation of background scenery for your movie. A 'thick' or 'thin' pencil may be used, designs and shapes being done on a blow-up grid similar to that used in **action**. Closed shapes can be filled from the Spectrum's colour palette, differentiating between ink and paper.

Take 1 is the editing department, the moment when all your elements are combined to your own choosing. 'Frames' may be dealt with one by one. Characters may be brought from memory onto the screen and positioned with the cursor, then taken through the screen to complete their action. It's possible to have up to 12 sprites on screen at one time. Music may be added at appropriate moments, and the dialogue you have written can be scrolled across the bottom of the screen to complete the effect. A final icon allows a 'premiere' of your masterpiece.

The booklet details how to set



up computer and video recorder to save out the finished film for a later viewing on the telly (this is where you amaze your family and friends)!

Side two of the cassette has a program to load in with several elements already in there. This can be used as your first exercise in using *Screenplay*. The software is described as 'easy to use', but in truth I found it rather complex and fiddly and not particularly obvious in its use. The icons help, but the inter-relation of the elements is far from clear, and the booklet's descriptions of how to use the various editors or cursor functions within a mode lacks clarity, despite the icons being shown with brief explanations of their functions.

Clearly it's possible to create a semblance of a film, but the final result is somewhat primitive, looking more like an early French talkie with English subtitles. Whilst I think there maybe quite a bit of appeal for the budding film director in *Screenplay*, and the price of the package isn't extraordinarily high, I can't really see that there is all that much point to it, and in truth the creation of film or TV programme using this computer software seems to me to be stretching the point further than it wants to go.

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CHIMERA

Producer: Firebird
Retail price: £3.95
Language: machine code
Author: S Ahmad

New from Firebird's Super Silver range is *Chimera*, an arcade adventure set upon a large Flying Dutchman look alike spaceship. A strange ghost ship has appeared far above the earth and placed itself in orbit over the USA. Apparently, its weapons are trained on Earth, so America, thoughtful and caring nation that it is, has decided to destroy the ghost ship. Placed around the ship are a number of warheads, all of which need to be primed before they can be activated. You have been sent upon a one man mission to prime the warheads and activate the destruction sequence to blow bits of the spaceship all over sunny America. Not a trivial task for a single operative, for who(or what)ever placed the ship into orbit also placed many barriers in the way of anyone trying to activate the warheads. Your first problem is to get past an electric fence. Hint: wander about the maze and you will soon find a spanner that can be used to manually deactivate electric fences.

Displayed from a very *Alien 8* point of view, *Chimera* uses the now trendy Ultimate style of graphics. The main sprite has to be rotated until it points in the direction you want to move, then moved. Along with the directional controls there's also a grab/use key for picking up and using handy objects found around the derelict hull. An scrolling message indicator is also included and provides a running commentary on what's happening. If you do cop it in

your quest, then it'll even give a short analysis as to you why you died.

Death is waiting for you in many shapes and sizes. Grabbing certain objects can end the game rather quickly — if you reach for an activated electric fence, for instance, and you don't have the spanner then you'll have to start again. And radiators lap up your limited water reserves. You have a limited quantity of provisions when you set out on your mission, and it has to be completed before they run out. There's no mistaking when you get killed either, as the computer yells out a hefty synthesised scream.

Upon activating the warheads you then have a limited amount of time to return to your start position before the bombs go off. Naturally you want to save yourself as well as the rest of the world. Get back to home and the game's over and everyone lives happily ever after.

CRITICISM

● 'What a plot! I've seen better in an Irwin Allen movie. Still the game's not bad. It's highly derivative, in terms of Ultimate's *Knight Lore* and *Alien 8* but when all is said and done, it looks good, plays well and kept me interested for quite a while. If more titles like this are released for £3.95, we will all have something to be pleased about. If you bought the Ultimate games, then you may have had your fill of them by now. If you missed out, or are just an addict, then this has to be worth getting!'

● 'Chimera is graphically very similar to the Ultimate games; one difference though is that it is definitely more of an arcade adventure than Ultimate's hits. As far as gameplay goes, it is very easy to get into and can

prove quite addictive but I can't help thinking that there is too little to the game. While the graphics are very good, there is hardly any significant animation, which is a bit of a let down. Chimera is well worth the £3.95 asking price but I suspect it will mainly appeal to people who don't like complex arcade adventures.'

● 'The thing that really gets me is that there is nothing to kill off in the game because of the logic problems. These, unfortunately, are trite, inane and (after figuring them out) leave nothing substantial to do. Bearing that in mind, there are some clever sound effects, good graphics and a game that will be something of a challenge (if for slightly annoying reasons). It's a well priced game. Perhaps it will encourage better.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: Z, C, B, M rotate left, X, V, N, SYMBOL SHIFT rotate right, A to ENTER move forward, Q to P collect/use, CAPS SHIFT or SPACE to pause game

Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2, Cursor

Keyboard play: Very Responsive

Use of colour: Reasonable

Graphics: Good

Sound: Good sound effects

Skill levels: One

Screens: 64

General rating: Better than many full price games

Use of computer	69%
Graphics	72%
Playability	73%
Getting started	75%
Addictive qualities	67%
Value for money	81%
Overall	71%

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GEOFF CAPES STRONG-MAN

Producer: Martech
Retail price: £7.95
Language: machine code
Author: John Wilson

Unlike some sports simulations *Geoff Capes Strong Man* requires more than mere joystick waggling. The game begins with a training session, the outcome of which governs your performance for the six events. The task for this session is to build Geoff's strength up as much as you can. At the bottom of the screen you see an empty bar graph. You have to waggle the joystick like crazy for a few seconds to get the red bar as far up the scale as possible. You can wimp out, and accept the default strength, but it's not that macho.

Every event begins with a rest period, when you share out the strength you have built up. The energy shown on the main bargraph can be allocated to the eight body parts represented by icons around the edge of the screen. Moving the arrow over an icon, you hold down fire until the desired amount of energy has been transferred onto the smaller bar graph contained within the icon. Repeat this process until all parts of the body are awarded some strength.

During an event, the rate at which a muscle's energy reserve is depleted depends on the level of effort you selected at the start and how often that particular part of the body is used during the task. Care has to be taken in allocating strength reserves, for if any part of the body is called upon during an event and found to have no strength, then Geoff collapses exhausted and you have to begin the game afresh.

During an event, the action is viewed on a central area of the screen, around which eight icons are grouped. The most novel feature of this game is the way in which joystick waggling has been replaced with 'icon chasing', making it much more than a 'how much punishment can you give your joystick' game. The Z and X keys are used at the start of each event to move a horizontal bar up and down on a scale from 0 to 100, indicating the effort Geoff is to put into the task in hand. The more effort Geoff puts into an event, the more rapidly he can complete it, and the more difficult it is for you!

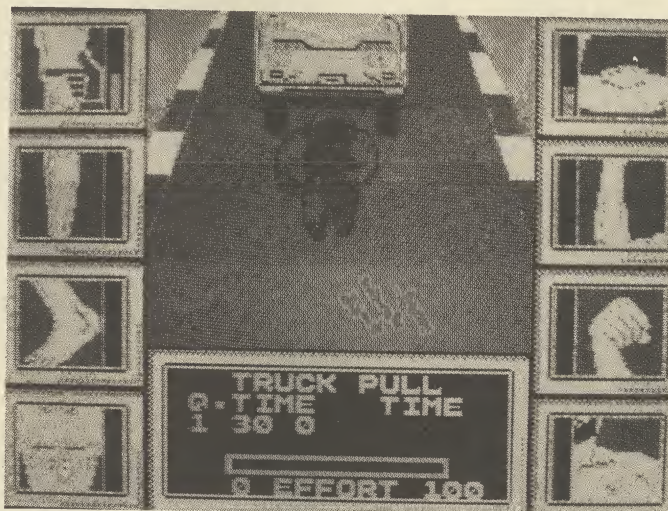
During the Lorry Pull, Barrel Loading and Car Roll events, the eight muscle icons around the screen flash, indicating the order in which the muscles are called upon as Geoff gets going. You must follow the order of the flashing icons by moving a yellow arrow over each icon in the sequence and pressing fire. If you manage to follow the order, then the icon you selected flashes green. If you select an icon out of sequence then it flashes red. If you fall too far behind the sequence, Geoff grinds to a halt — and if you mess up totally, you can wait until all the icons flash red, indicating that the sequence is about to start again. The speed at which the icons flash yellow depends on the amount of effort you have selected — at 100 percent you aren't blink. You are competing against the clock in all three events.

The Log Chop requires you to press the fire button with split second timing. An Axe moves to

ready. Hitting the fire button brings the hammer down with a vengeance. The quicker you are at hitting fire after the muscles have flashed red, the better Geoff does.

Sumo Wrestling is the last event, and the only event where Geoff is forced to take on another competitor, face to face. The winner is the person who pushes his opponent out of the ring within the qualifying time. Pressing the fire button at the right moment gain ground for Geoff: bad timing loses ground.

Although Geoff is awarded a score for the completion of each event, the aim is to complete all six. If he fails in any event, either because he was exhausted or because he failed to qualify, then a new game starts. Should Geoff emerge from the events victorious you can have another training session and begin again, but this time the events are harder to complete than the time before. If you want to keep measure of your muscle power,



and fro across the screen, above a log. When fire is pressed it descends and chops a lump out of the wood. Sections of softwood take one chop to cut through, hardwood needs two chops and knots, toughest of all, three chops. The aim is to select an easy section of log to attack, so you can cut through within the time limit.

Barrel Loading uses both joystick waggling and icon chase. Geoff must load five barrels onto a truck within the time allowed. Wagging the joystick moves him over to the barrel and makes him pick it up. From here on, chase the icons until he reaches the truck, then press fire at the right moment and Geoff lobs the barrel into the truck. Then it's back across the screen to collect the next barrel...

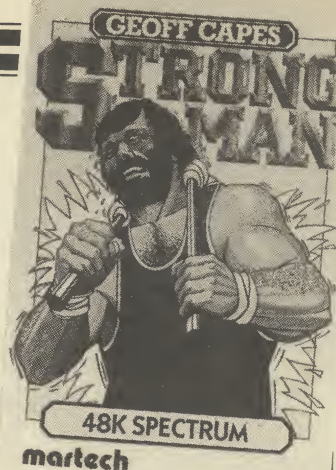
The Fairground Bell relies on a sustained period of waggling, until all of the muscle icons flash red indicating that Geoff is

then remember to enter your name on the high score table.

CRITICISM

● 'Though not being overkeen on this type of simulation I was quite impressed by *Geoff Capes Strong Man*. Unlike other sport type simulations, this one was not wholly dependent on joystick waggling. The muscle selector is a great idea — combined with the effort selector, quite a bit of control is available over Geoff. For a one-load game, there is quite lot scope, with the six events being quite different from one another. This is definitely one of the best games of this type to appear on the Spectrum. Worth a look at over the yuletide season.'

● 'Sports simulations have become a bit long in the tooth



now but Martech's latest release injects new vigour into the now worn idea. Because the game doesn't depend so much on smashing your joystick it is much more enjoyable. The graphics aren't that impressive and the game suffers from a distinct lack of animation, but overall it presents a fair challenge. This type of game is very playable but after you have played all the events it can start to get a bit boring. *Geoff Capes* is definitely one of those games worth getting if you know you like the type.'

● 'I liked the way in which reaction skills as well as joystick-destroying ability have been combined in this game. The events all present a fair challenge — with the possible exception of the Log Chop, which is graphically uninspiring and fairly simplistic. You just have to crank effort up to maximum and keep pressing the fire button at the right moment. Overall a nice competitive game, from a different mould to *Daly's* and the rest. The tunes which accompanied each event were quite jolly, too!'

COMMENTS

Control keys: Q to T left, Y to P right, 1 to 0 up, A to L down, SPACE to fire

Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2
Keyboard play: not recommended, especially for building up strength

Use of colour: effective
Graphics: nothing special, really, but adequate

Sound: appropriate tunes at the start of each event

Skill levels: one, getting progressively more difficult
Screens: 6 events, plus High Score table and training screens
General rating: a pleasant change from perpetual joystick waggling 'athlete' games

Use of computer	77%
Graphics	71%
Playability	85%
Getting started	81%
Addictive qualities	73%
Value for money	79%
Overall	78%

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In *Swords and Sorcery* you play the part of an adventurer who has entered the catacombs wherein lies the priceless armour made by Zob, Master Armourer. As you progress round the network of corridors and rooms that form the playing area of the basic game, your character will slowly develop skills and attributes — which can be saved out to tape and re-used in subsequent games, or indeed, transferred to other game scenarios.

To begin with, your character is not blessed with very much in the way of spell-casting abilities or fighting prowess, but as you encounter monsters and defeat them and find objects and use them your character becomes more powerful. With practice, you will learn how best to use the treasures, weapons and artefacts contained within the dungeon, gaining skills and becoming more able to deal with the tricky situations that await you around every corner.

Spells can be cast, monsters greeted, threatened, fought or bribed and a whole host of tricks, traps and problems lie in wait as you explore the dungeons, using the computer as your eyes and your wits as guide. Moving through the corridors and rooms, a view of your character's progress is presented in a three dimensional window, which presents a moving picture rather as if you had a video camera strapped to your shoulder. (Weeeeell, not exactly in glorious living technicolour, but we're talking Spectrum here, not Cray 1!)

For £9.95 you certainly get your money's worth of fun — and for those who want more, PSS will be offering a range of extras which enhance the initial playing environment. A village module, due for release in the New Year, will allow you to take a character into the world outside the dungeon. It'll be possible to trade articles from your character's inventory for objects in the village — weapons and charms may be purchased, for instance, and then taken into the dungeon to make life easier on the quest.

And there's no reason why a character run by one person can't be pitted against someone else's *Swords and Sorcery* persona — an

arena module is on the drawing board which should allow two people to load their characters into a common environment and slug it out! The definitive answer to those "my character's tougher than yours" arguments. These add-on modules will cost less than £5.00 each, so should be within every player's financial grasp.

All this variety is made possible by the MIDAS system, under which the initial module, *Swords and Sorcery*, was written. In the basic game, you have three dungeon levels to explore. No less than forty eight different monsters lurk round corners and hide in rooms. Each monster has its own particular characteristics, strengths and weaknesses — and it is up to you to decide whether to fight or flee when you come across one of the dungeon's animate inhabitants.

It's a captivating game, which can be played in a number of ways — going on a monster hunt for example, or entering the dungeon with a view to improving your character's skills in a specific area, perhaps magic-using are just two possible approaches. There's always the lure of that priceless armour ... Our Mr Brewster was well impressed with the game — it's a SMASH this issue, at any rate — "and no mistake!"

For fun, we'd like you to design a monster that might be found round a corner in *Swords and Sorcery*. Top prize in the monster-designing stakes is a real laser disk based video game — *Dragon's Lair* — an ideal means of filling those little awkward moments in between games of *Swords*. Twenty five runners up are going to win their very own PSS Goodie Bag, too, containing software, posters, badges — the usual range of nice things to impress your friends with.

What you have to do is design (create?) a monster. A totally original (and probably very nasty) monster that hasn't appeared anywhere else before, except in your imagination. Send us a description of its appearance, attributes, weaknesses (if any), character, magic using abilities and general temperament. If you really want to round off your entry, a picture of the beast might be an idea

**A Monster prize
to be won in the PSS
Swords and Sorcery
Monster Challenge**

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— if you can bear to actually commit its form to parchment.
To give just a little taste of the kind of monster we mean, here's a couple of thumbnail sketches taken from the *Swords and Sorcery* manual:

DEVIL MAGE: A Devil Mage is a powerful magic-using devil called up from the Abyss. Devil Mages avoid hand to hand combat, preferring to blow their victims apart from a sensible distance. Not even remotely harmless.

GORGONS: In Greek mythology, Medusa and her sisters were Gorgons with the ability to turn those who viewed them into stone. Being turned to stone is ever-so-slightly fatal. As a rule, avoid Gorgons — unless you want to be stoned.

REVENANT GUARDIANS: These unfortunate creatures were once adventurers like yourself. They have been bound into perpetual service as guardians, and though their flesh has long since rotted away, their powers remain strong. Beware, lest this happens to you!

Now, these little pencil portraits are very short, pithy and to the point — when it comes to describing nearly fifty monsters in a game manual, there's not much room to go into anything more than the salient details. Go into as much detail as you like, within reason, when it comes to describing **your** monster.

Good luck, don't get too frightened while you work on your entry and make sure it arrives at **SWORDS AND SORCERY COMPETITION**, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB by or before 30th January 1986. And don't even dream about cheating. We've got a copy of "OUT OF THE PIT", the Fighting Fantasy Monster-ography. It'll be reviewed along with your creations, probably in the March Issue.



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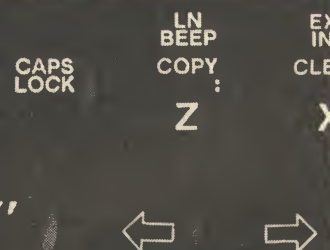
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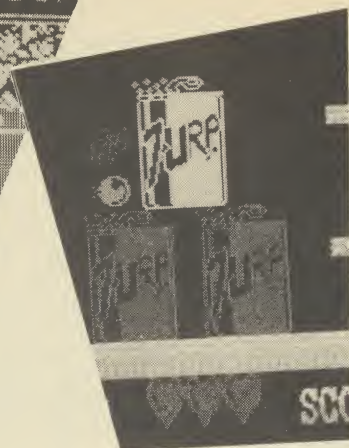
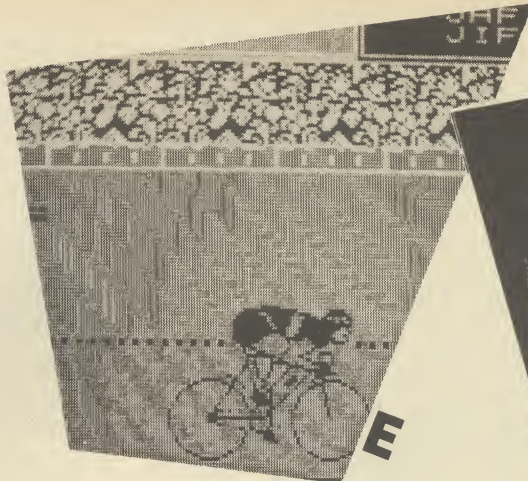
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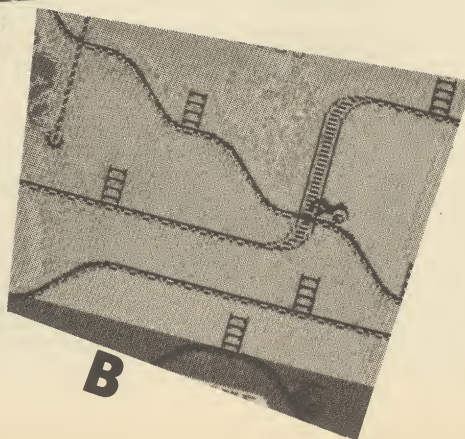
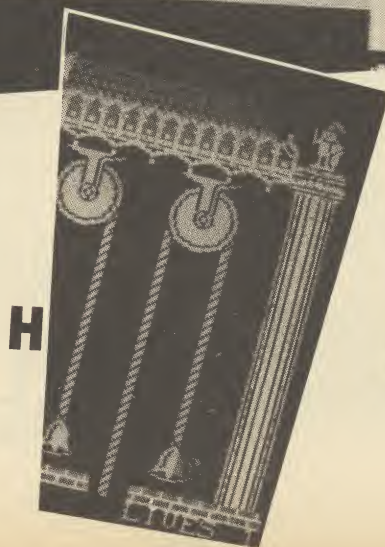
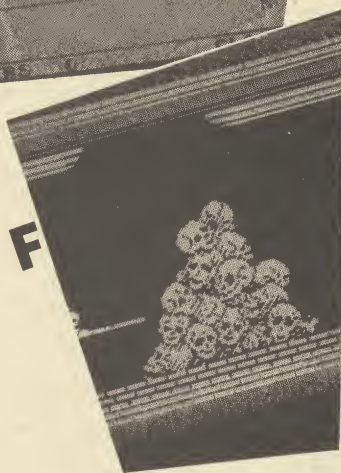
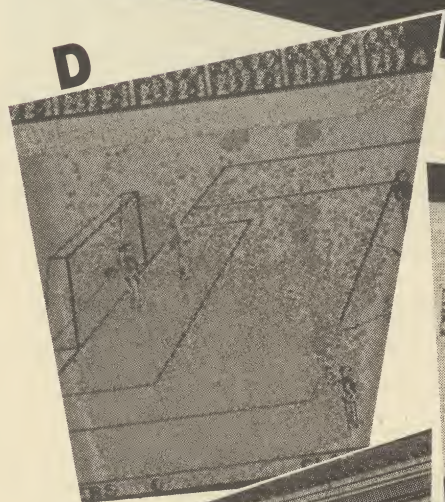
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To test your awareness of Spectrum Software in General — and Ocean Software in the very particular — we've assembled screen shots from the Eight Ocean Games released in 1985. All you have to do is identify them. Easy Huh?

Well, we thought it was a bit TOO easy, really, so we've complicated matters a little bit. What we've gone and done is messed round with the photies a little bit — you haven't quite got the full picture to play with, as they say. (Heaven knows who THEY are, but we'll leave that question for another competition shall we? — Comps Minion)

If you can identify all eight Ocean games from the fragmented photies presented here, you could complete your collection of Ocean Games — you can choose one of the eight games on these pages and if you win, you'll receive it totally free of charge. Five particularly lucky persons will also win their game inside an Ocean Goodie Bag — a tasteful sports/computer bag that will make you the envy of your friends. And who knows, the chaps at Ocean might feel moved to pop a few extra goodies in, by way of a 1986 surprise!

Pore over the pictures, flip through your Back Issue collection if you're really stumped, and work out the names of the games. Jot them down on the entry form, next to the identifying letters and then, so we know which one of the eight games you'd like, ring round the game of your choice. Add your name and address, put the form in an envelope, cook on a low oven for around twenty minutes and..

OOPS. in an envelope, stick a stamp on it and despatch with all haste to OCEAN COMP, CRASH TOWERS, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB.

Get the eight names right, get the entry form into the special cardboard box before 30th Jan 1986 and you could be a SPOT THE GAME Winner. Off you go now ...

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I've worked out the names of the games and have written them ever-so-neatly against the letters below, which correspond to the piccies. AND I've ringed my choice of prize.

- A
- B
- C
- D
- E
- F
- G
- H

My Name is:

AND I LIVE AT

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BEACH-HEAD II
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on Commodore 64



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LLOYD
MANGRAM'S

FORUM

This is a slightly shorter version of the Forum in order to fit in a BUG BOX special by PAUL MALLINSON from Doncaster, whose comic strip 'The Day the Bugs took over at CRASH and ZZAP!' impressed me no end when it turned up earlier in the year. Some of its contents have become out of date due to changes in the ZZAP! editorial team, but the general story still holds good — and I'm flattered!

Instead of kicking off with the Letter of the Month, the writer of which receives £20 worth of software of their choice, don't forget, this month it is the second one in, because of the way they flow!

NOT LLOYD'S FAULT

Dear Lloyd,
I have been reading CRASH since the June 85 issue and I would like to say a few words on your magazine. First, I would like to point out that this letters section is for everybody. Most readers do not want to read about thirteen year-old school boys called Mark Jagasia (no offence). We do not want to read about CRASH making an error on *Dambusters* by putting 633 instead of 617. Now come on

CRASH readers, pull yourselves together. Let's make a fresh start in the January issue. There, there Lloyd, I know it wasn't your fault.

Secondly, your reviews. I would like to say that they are great. Keep it up. Overall Lloyd, I think the mag is really, really terrific and I shall always buy it, no matter what the price.

Michael Handy, Tyne & Wear

Thanks Michael, it's nice to know there are still a few loyal fans out there, who appreciate my hard work!

Unlike the NEXT reader ...

LM

GET IT TOGETHER

Mangram:

Three cheers on making a complete hash of the last few issues of CRASH, reducing Forum to the level of such trivia as the late lamented *Big K*. Way back in the good old days of Angus Ryal and the Terminal Man, before Roger Kean became 'Publishing Executive', you used to complain about not having enough space to print our letters (presumably why my letter never got printed).

Now the amount of Spectrum software being released is tailing off, you apparently have too much space and some bungling minion has decided to fill it with the pathetic Bug Box. This reader seems to recall that the original Oli-bugs were small pictures, tastefully drawn by a good artist and designed to liven up the Forum and to break up the text into smaller, more readable blocks, alleviating the boredom of reading pages totally filled with text. Perhaps the idea was to make Bug Box like this but the intention was surely not for it to take its present form — namely, a load

of infantile bull ...

Any halfwit three year old with a crayon could reproduce some of the 'pictures' in your pages — even you could do it. Also, the so called cartoons about 'Life at CRASH' are drawn by a load of infants who think they are really amazing guys who know everybody on the CRASH team and have the right to mouth off at them, pretending to be on familiar terms. These cartoons aren't funny, just foolish and immature.

Also I cannot compliment you on your choice of letters — 'Electro Bop', *Knight Lore*, *Alien 8* controversy and the wombats who write 'funny' letters (most of which are just rubbish).

Now Lloyd, you cannot wriggle out of this by saying you just print what we send in — it's you who decides which of the letters actually go to print. Okay, after all the abuse, here are some suggestions as to how to solve the problems. Ban Bug Box and get Oli back on the job. Print more letters like David Slater's in the November ish. What about cutting out a lot of the trivia by printing a photo of yourself. This may reduce your status as an enigmatic figure but



A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE EX-MARKETING MINION



Oh woe is me! I have failed you, oh CRASH readers, and this will mean spending Christmas on the CRASH Gibbet, enduring all sorts of unpleasanties, like being forced to watch Gary Liddon eat juicy slugs and being made to listen to Klaus Wunderlich and his amazing organ. Oli the Merciless is aptly named.

There's no fabaroonie subscription offer this month, for you to spend your Christmas Pennies on, you see. Oh dear. I'm in trouble.

Fear not, though, folks. Once I've listened to the collected works of Klaus (not Santa Klaus, sadly) I will get to work and attempt to make amends by presenting you with a truly wonderful deal to start the New Year with. So don't rush off and spend all you loot until you've seen what's on offer in our February issue. Which you'll be able to get at the end of January 1986.

And for all you disappointed peoples, still waiting for *Street Hawk*, which you ordered ages and ages ago, here's some news: Auntie Aggie assures me that she should be receiving the game from Ocean by the end of this year. If you can't stand waiting any longer, give her a ring on 0584 5620 and she'll let you know the titles of the games you can have as an alternative.

Ho hum. It's off to the Gibbet. Think of me, while you're opening your pressies and eating Christmas Pud. I don't expect I'll even get a stray slug from Mr Liddon's supply. He's sooooo greedy!

See y'all in 1986, and have a happy festive wotsit.



RIDICULOUS, PETTY COMMENTS

Dear Sir,
I am writing to your magazine for the second time to tell you what I and many of my friends think about your Forum. I think it's the most interesting part of the magazine because I like to hear what other people think about the magazine and about the computer market as a whole. But I also feel that people write some really silly letters as well. For instance, some moan about small printing errors or whether *Ghostbusters* is good or not. This is a matter of opinion and the whole universe does not want to know. I also think that the petty comments on whether Lloyd Mangram is better than Robin Candy are ridiculous. Every mag makes mistakes and even CRASH is not perfect. All these letters take up a lot of space and spoil the Forum somewhat.

Another point I would like to make is about software piracy. Some software companies are making it very difficult to copy

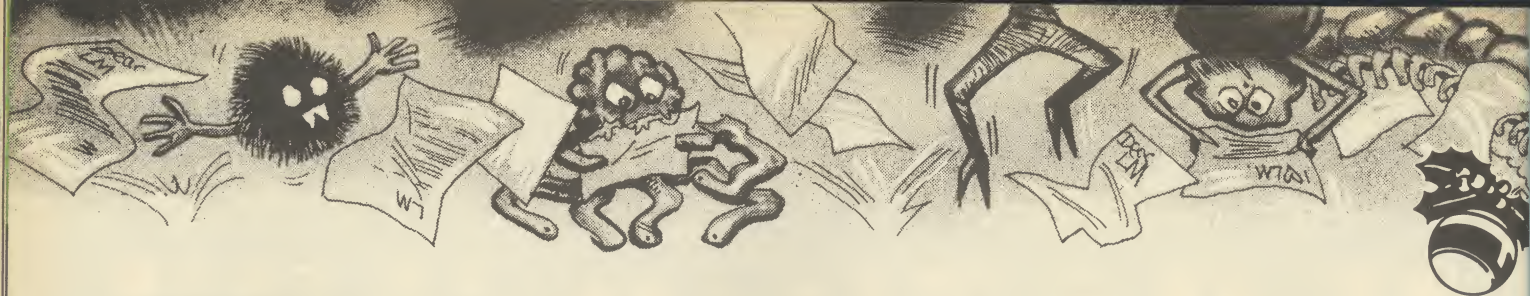
would reduce the number of silly letters and cartoons.

If CRASH continues on this decline, it is in danger of losing a reader. That may not seem like much to you but I assure you there must be many others like me who feel the same way. If you're not careful, you could end up with a small readership composed mainly of the 8-12 age group.

Tom Buchanan, Aberdeenshire

There's some good points there, Tom, and No, I won't wriggle out. It IS true, however, that the Forum does tend to rely on the content of what's sent in — that's only fair. I would like to hear what other readers think of these points. As for BUG BOX, I must say that some of the stuff has been very good, I think anyway, and I hope you think this month's cartoon is actually worthy of being printed. Over to you Tom (and that's one letter you have got printed and what's more, I thought it was interesting enough to be this month's letter of the month — software on its way)! Tom isn't alone in his thoughts however

LM



their games. Although this poses few problems for the home copier, who can spend time on one game, it must cause many more mistakes on the big time crooks' mass copiers. Incidentally, a certain high street store does not allow their games to be tested. They do however, let you buy the game, take it home and as long as you have the receipt, take the game back and get a refund. Surely this makes it difficult for those who need the game only for an evening in order to copy it? Although they might get suspicious after a while.

I would also like to point out that the Adventure International advertisement in the November ish is extremely misleading. It says *Gremlins* is a Smash but the June review says nothing of the sort! It also claims that *Robin of Sherwood* is a Smash when, to my knowledge, is has not even been reviewed yet.

Sean Crossan, Cambridge

I confess to being surprised at how many readers do concern themselves about whether I'm better than Robin Candy or not — there's no argument after all — I'm better. You weren't the only reader to wonder about the Adventure International ads,

Sean ...
LM

Dear Lloyd,
Adventure International are stretching the truth just a bit. In CRASH 22 page 130 the advert for *Gremlins* labels it with a CRASH SMASH award, but Derek, although he liked it only gave it seven out of ten. *Robin of Sherwood* was indeed a SMASH but was not a ZZAP! SIZZLER as the advert would have us believe. Both these awards are thought to be about the ultimate in reviewing marks and they act as a great influence on whether or not to buy. Whilst both the games are very good, surely AI shouldn't be allowed to do this? Anthony Bailey, Carshalton, Surrey.

The Ad International business is a bit of a mystery to me, although it's true that they were told that Robin of Sherwood was a Smash — the reviews were completed in between issue dates and they got that into their next ad rather fast. How did it happen then?

As to the Mangram/Candy type letters — well, here's another ...
LM

SUSSED!

Dear Lloyd,
You may be able to fool some of us most of the time, most of us

some of the time, but you can't fool all of us all of the time. You see, Mangram, we've got you sussed. You're no overworked underpaid superstar. You're not even called Mangram.

Yes Lloyd, you're that world famous con-man, Ivor Disguisor. With your millions of disguises, you could pass yourself off as anyone you wanted to. You've been trying to rule the world for years, haven't you Mangram? They say Hitler is dead but they never did find his body, did they?

Now you have a new plan. You've led us along for almost two years but you have been sussed at last. Every CRASH Smash was written by you. Every game written by someone else was written off. Now you have got everyone playing your games, they can't stop. All you need to do is stop making these games and stop writing CRASH and Britain will be yours. Soon the rest of the world will follow and your ambition will have been achieved.

Well, I'm going to stop you. Ha! Yes, I too can disguise myself and I've found out all your secrets. You see, I am Robin Candy. I print tips and pokes so that your games can be finished. I too wish to rule the world and I will.

Of course I am open to bribes. For *Scooby Doo* and *Robin of the Wood*, you can have Australia, China and Russia. If you decide to throw in *Hypersports* too, we'll let you have America. If you keep printing your brill mag, you can have Ludlow — if you're lucky. I'm waiting for your reply. Neil Commings, Stockport, Cheshire

Actually I did write a game once. It was a huge maze game, and I wrote it in BASIC on a ZX81 using PRINT AT statements for the block graphics. Jolly good it was too, Franco Frey did the movement routines for me to guide my little hero (an X) around the maze. But you can't fool me, I know you're not Robin Candy because your spelling is too good.
LM

ASTRO WHAT?

Dear Lloyd,
How on Earth can Hewson Consultants be serious by launching such rubbish? I am of course, referring to *Astro-Clone*. I had bought *Avalon* and *Dragonarc* previously and found them to be entertaining and excellent. So after reading your review of *Astro-clone* I went out and bought it. I wondered why you had not given it a Crash Smash. When I loaded it, I found out. The game was a terrible disappointment. The 'Defender' screen was so

frustrating, I could barely look at it. After taking the Valium, I loaded it again, hoping that the screen might just be a bug in the program. I just can't believe that a game with such a brilliant title screen and excellent predecessors can be such a hair-tearing, nail-biting pile of machine code. Maybe I'm over-reacting but when I had finished the game I was a nervous wreck.

I spent a whole twenty minutes trying to find the so called Seiddab cruisers and when I did find one, it was only a fleeting glimpse because I was instantly destroyed by the millions of asteroids, rockets, lasers and so on. I hate this game so far. I've played it sixteen times so far and maybe I'm useless but I only found a starbase twice and this is the worst bit. When you've docked in a starbase and you are in a room, it's really hard to see what you're doing because everything is the same colour and I found I was picking things up without realising it.

It's a great shame Steve Turner should write such a load of rubbish. Perhaps he should redesign the whole thing. Otherwise, I hope that Robin Candy prints some pokes to bypass the 'Defender' screen. Lastly, I would like to point out that your review of *Starquake* was slightly misleading. There are in fact fourteen teleports and not six as your review stated. Neil Jackson, Kennington

I'm sorry to hear that you didn't aren't enjoy(ing) Astro Clone. I have to admit to not playing it all that much myself, although I have watch the great RC whizzing around the place. The 'Defender' screens didn't seem as impossible as you describe, and I thought the starbase interiors were very good, especially with the control method employed. However, I would agree that the game isn't as wonderful as the Avalon duet. It's worth remembering that programmers, like anyone else, can be uneven in making things. But it's surely hardly deserving of the term 'rubbish'?
LM

YOU'LL NEVER PRINT IT

Dear Lloyd,
I know there's no chance of this letter being printed because you make them all up. And you print all those letters bringing down Robin Candy while the rest of you get praise (mind you he deserves it). Anyway, to the reason why this letter won't get printed. The other day, I was thumbing through a copy of ZZAP! (forgive me) and to my horror discovered that w about you, like how old you are. You tell us nothing. Farewell, Lloyd. Keep looking behind you. Any

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Phil Rogers 'Peek & Poke', "Popular Computing Weekly" Jan. 1985 (Vol. IV, No. 1)

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Computer column, "4 Heaton's Digest" (Vol. I, No. 11)

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"Of all the repair companies 'Sinclair User' spoke to, MANCOMP seemed the most professional when it came to advice and a helpful attitude". August 1985

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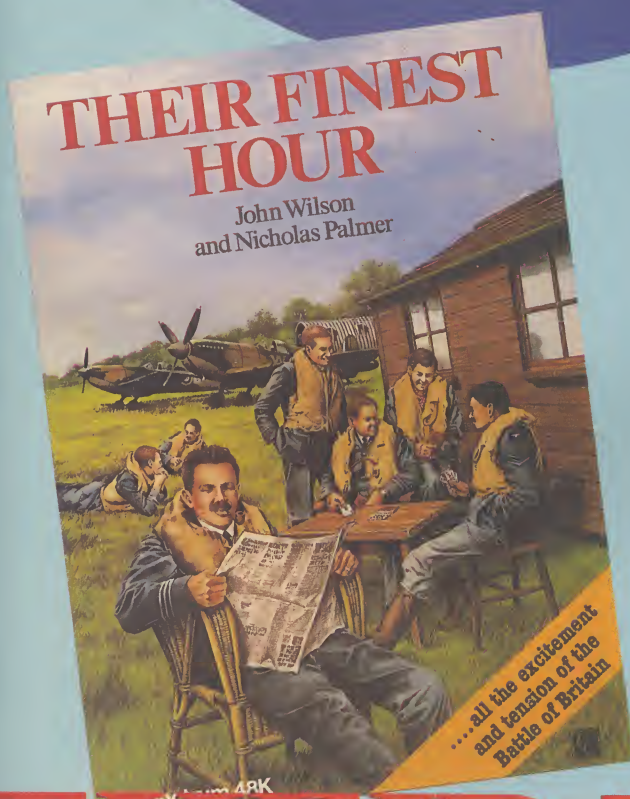
"What's that picture supposed to be?"

"Er, eye-catching, that's what it's supposed to be."

"But it doesn't tell you anything about the great new icon-driven Battle of Britain strategy game, **THEIR FINEST HOUR**, from Century Communications, publishers of **THE FOURTH PROTOCOL**. I mean, what's it got to do with using your skill and judgement to stem the almost inexorable advance of Goering's Luftwaffe? Does it tell you anything about the deployment of Spitfire squadrons and ack-ack batteries, the allocation of fresh pilots, or keeping in touch with the weather forecast? How about the daily reports you have to make to Winston Churchill, and the pulse rate feature where you control the speed of the game?"

"Well, er..."

"Right, we'd better hurry up and design a new ad before the game hits the streets on 9 December, and people start writing to and phoning Century Communications at 62-65 Chandos Place, London WC2N 4NW, Tel: 01-240 3411 and asking for copies."



THEIR FINEST HOUR



Their Finest Hour — a great strategy game simulating The Battle of Britain, by Nicholas Palmer and John Wilson. Published by Century Communications for the 48K Spectrum at £9.95.

48K Spectrum



day now and ...
Jason Ayres, Eynsham, Oxon

As a matter of fact I'm almost exactly twice Robin Candy's age, so there's one 'fact' — but I know you won't believe it. It wasn't the money lured me onto the ZZAP! pages — it was the promise of a much bigger desk (which I didn't get — never trust management), and I don't think I answer letters that slag the Spectrum in any favourable way. Would I do a thing like that, even for a bigger desk? Angus stopped writing for CRASH because he got a different 'day time' job at Games Workshop when they stopped doing computer software, and because he wanted to do more writing along the line of short stories and things — and yes, we might start printing some of our hi-scores, although you have to remember, we don't have time to get them — we're too busy looking at the next set of games! LM

HYPOCRITES

Dear Lloyd,
What the hell is all this fuss about piracy? You want to stop piracy — no way! Simply because

it remains too easy. Just look at the number of commercial copiers (whenever a new security device is invented, you can bet your microdrive there will be a new way to crack it). What you say about piracy will get nowhere while your magazine continues to carry the adverts for them. It just makes you look a hypocrite. Can't you see that? If magazines stopped printing these ads, it would help much more than just talking about it. Anyway, I'm sure someone else would buy the space.

S Mabley, Kings Lynn, Norfolk

I doubt very much whether us printing copier ads makes a jot of difference, and we aren't hypocrites — the ads are for microdrive facilities. Besides which all the arguments put forward in this column and any other in CRASH in the past (it's a subject I've tried to drop lately) have been about either the morality of piracy or the idiocy of helping to destroy an industry that provides entertainment. No one at CRASH has EVER suggested you can stamp out home copying — so perhaps you had better go back through CRASH and have a look at some of those old arguments. LM

LOADING SCREENS PLEASE

Dear Lloyd,
Why don't you include shots of loading screens in your reviews as I am a great fan of loading screens and I really would like to see what they look like? If the game hasn't got one, then fair enough.

Stephen Henstead, Pemberton, Wigan

We often do put loading screens in the reviews, especially if they look good. Sometimes, however, it's a question of space allocation per review, and when using a loading screen might mean missing out a more useful game screen, then the choice falls in favour of the game screen. Another problem that sometimes arises is that though we may have a finished copy of a game, sometimes the review copies are missing the refinement of a loading screen. LM

WHERE'S SCOOPY?

Dear CRASH,
What's happening? Are you cracking up because nothing new and exciting has been thrown at your desk for you to review. And you want to keep us interested in your great mag so we sit on the edge of our computer seats and tune in next month. If so, then you do not need to because I wouldn't trade CRASH for ZZAP! or anything else.

Anyway, in your *Scooby Doo* preview, you said that the game 'should be released at the end of October'. Well I looked in every computer shop for miles around, without result.

Finally, I phoned Elite who told me I would have to wait until January 6th of the new year before I could get my hands on it. So what did happen to the release dates you told thousands about. Were you given the wrong information, were there set backs at Elite or were you just wrong?

Garrie Deadman, Bellingham

No, we're not cracking up — at least I don't think so, though I'm a bit puzzled as to what you are referring. And no, we were not 'wrong' about Scooby. The article was very much an early preview and the hoped for release date was given as passed on to us, but it wasn't a firm release date. You can't have everything you know, Garrie. I mean we could stop doing previews if you'd rather ... No, of course you wouldn't. At time of writing, Scooby Doo is expected any day. LM

THE PERFECT GAME

Dear Lloyd,
Here are a few of my views on what makes the perfect game. It should have an extensive playing area of at least 70 screens (my favourite game, *Starquake* has over 400 screens — quite an achievement for Bubble Bus). The game should have good graphics but not too detailed as this seems to make the colours clash quite repulsively. In this case, the best example seems to be *Dynamite Dan*. Lastly, the game should be addictive and fast — lack of speed was what really let Popeye down.

JP Morrow, West Denton, Newcastle upon Tyne

Anyone want to comment on that? It would be enjoyable to find out what CRASH readers really reckon makes the Perfect Game. let's hear. LM

HYPOCRITES AGAIN

Dear Floyd,
Don't tell your cousin this but I think he's a hypocrite. I am referring to Steve Johnson's letter in issue 21. He asked you to label the very best game in each issue and also have a 'Worst game of the month' award. You replied that it was better to just have a selection of good games and let the reader decide, according to his or her tastes. Why, in that case do you have a 'Gold Medal' in ZZAP! to distinguish games of superior quality? Also Steve suggested that rather than tagging a bad game's review with a disrespectful remark, you should let the review stand on its own. Why in ZZAP! is there a Tacky label which really brings down the game and software house concerned?

Matthew Parselle, Wilmslow, Cheshire

The answer is actually dead simple — I don't make up ZZAP! reviewing policy as regards Sizzlers, Gold Medals and the like, and I stick by my original words. The way ZZAP! works was set up first by its editor, Chris Anderson, when he came over from PCG magazine, and the Commodore readers obviously like the way that works. LM

So much for the Christmas Special letters. I hope everyone enjoys the BUG BOX Special — I thought the ideas and drawing were well worth its large-scale inclusion. Back next month, indeed, next year with more from the pens of yourselves.

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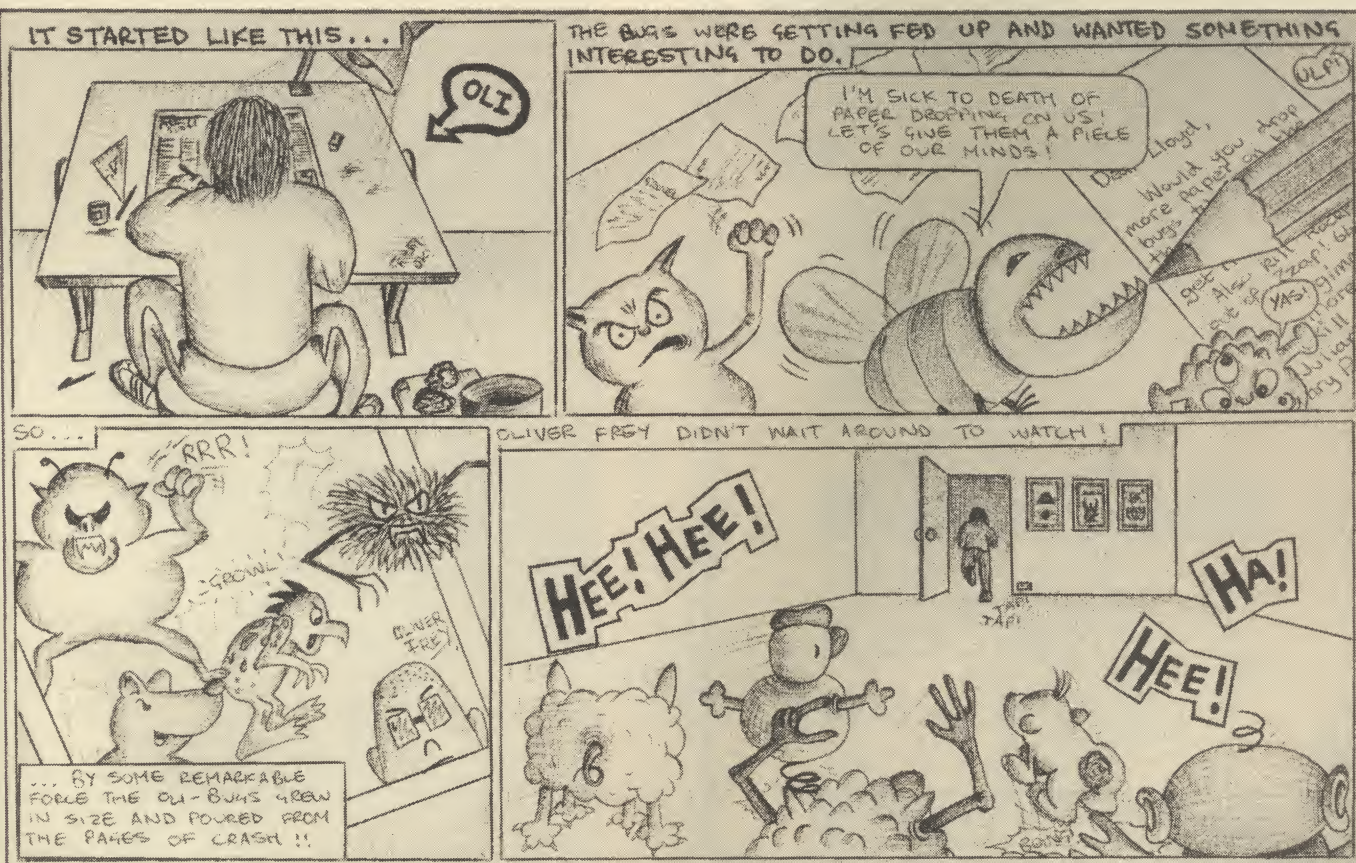


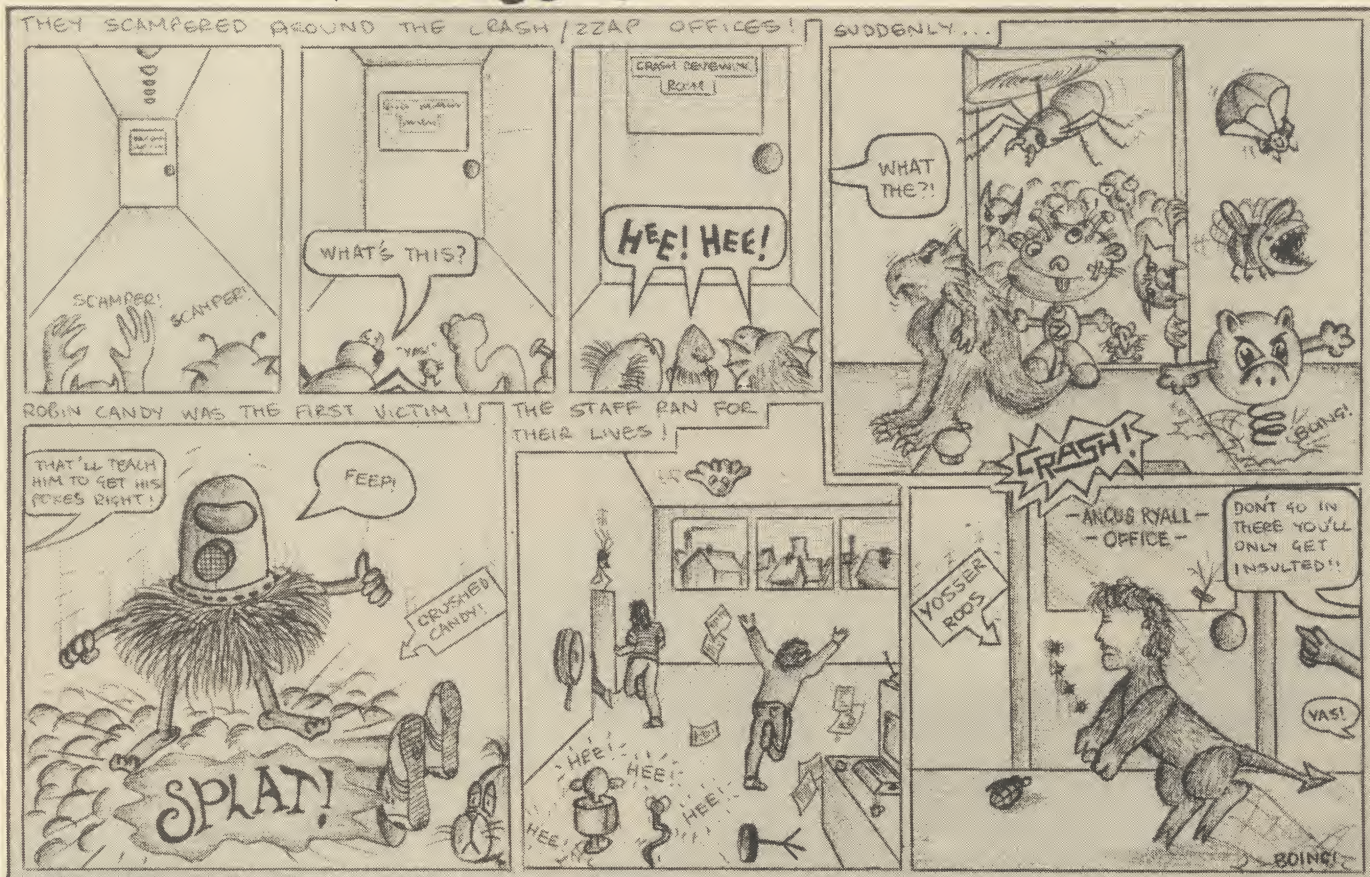


A cartoon illustration of a box labeled "BUG BOX" in large, bold, black letters. The box is tilted, and several insects are emerging from it: a large beetle on the left, a caterpillar on the right, and a small fly at the bottom right. The box has a decorative pattern on its top and sides.

BY:
PAUL
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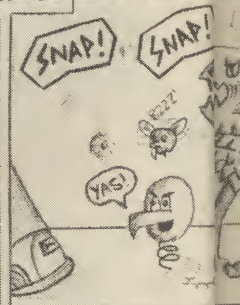
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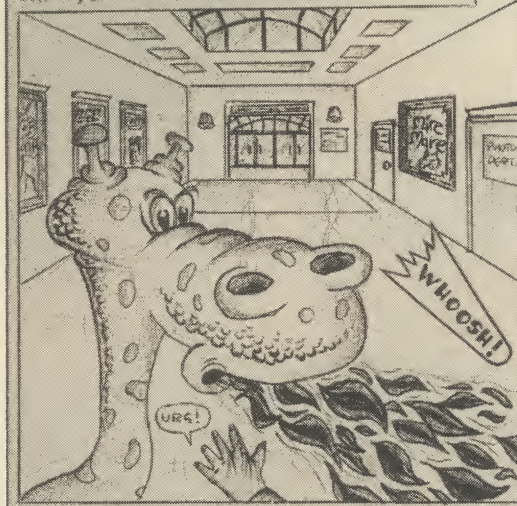
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NEW

ONE BY ONE UNTIL MOST WERE GONE!

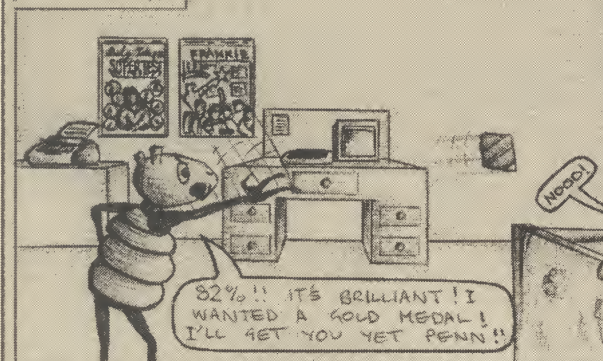


CHRIS, JOHN AND BEN ARE NO MORE...





ROCKFORD !!!?



92%!! ITS BRILLIANT! I WANTED A GOLD MEDAL! I'LL GET YOU YET PENN!!

BOB AND GARY ARE COWERING BEHIND A TABLE...



I KNOW J.R.S AN ACE AT DEFENDER BUT WHAT DOES HE MEAN?

WHAT'S THE SITUATION ROCKFORD?



IT LOOKS LIKE ITS GOODBY AND GOODNIGHT TO BOB AND GARY!

"WELL I GOT CHRIS ANDERSON BUT RIGNALL DID A BUNK SHOUTING 'DEFENDER' OR SOMETHING!"



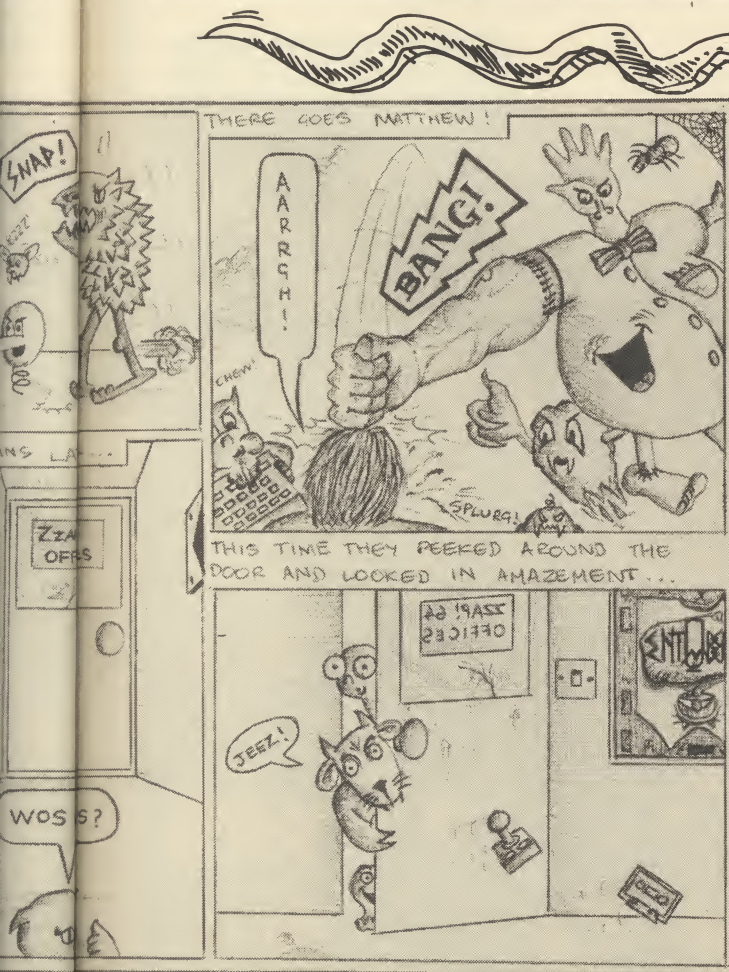
NOW LOOK HERE! I'M FED UP WITH ALL THIS WAITIN', LETS GIT THEM THAR REVIEWERS BEHIN' THAT THAR TABLE AN' DO 'EM OVER!!



HEY! WHO TURNED OUT THE LIGHTS?!

GET THE MORTALS!

EEEK!



THERE GOES MATTHEW!

AARRGH!

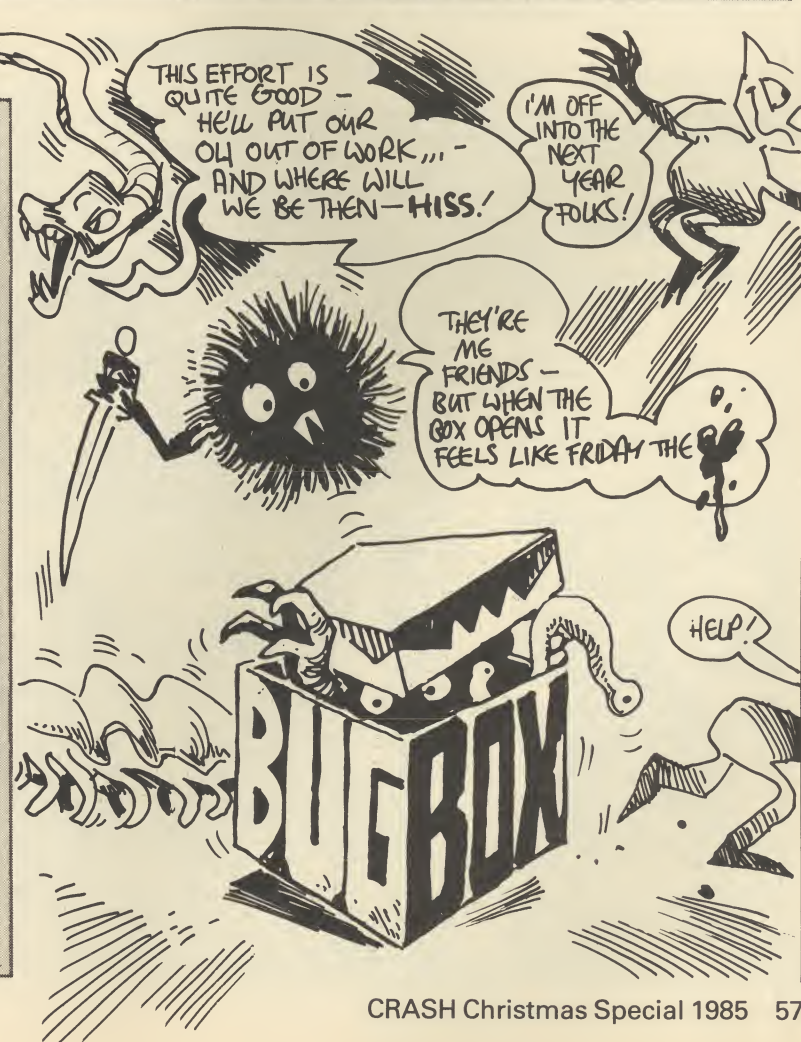
BANG!

THIS TIME THEY PEEKED AROUND THE DOOR AND LOOKED IN AMAZEMENT...

JEET!

OFFICE

WOS?



THIS EFFORT IS QUITE GOOD - HE'LL PUT OUR OIL OUT OF WORK... - AND WHERE WILL WE BE THEN - HISS!

I'M OFF INTO THE NEXT YEAR FOLKS!

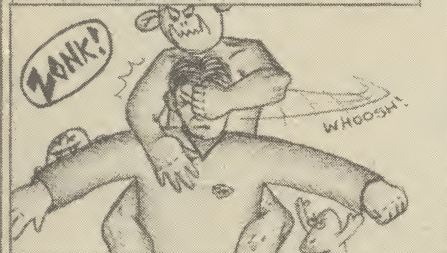
THEY'RE ME FRIENDS - BUT WHEN THE BOX OPENS IT FEELS LIKE FRIDAY THE

HELP!

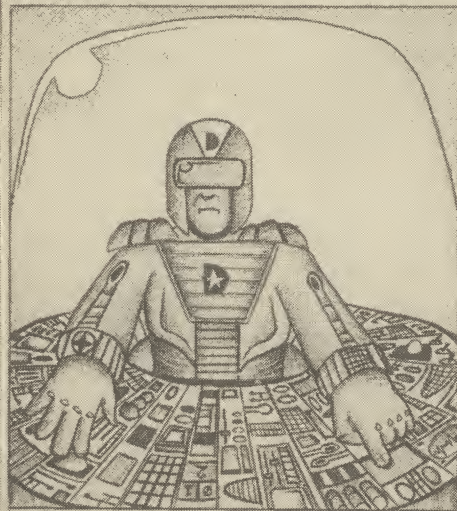




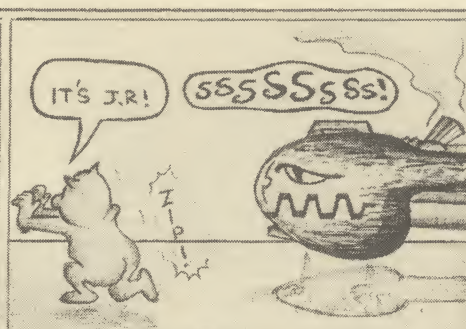
GARY AND BOB TAKE THE PUNCHES...



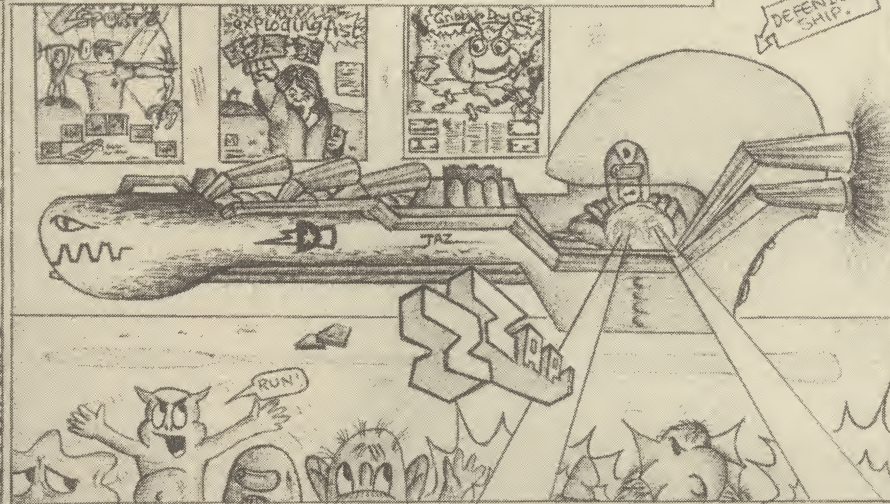
JULIAN RIGNALL HAD A MYSTIC ALTAR
E40 KNOWN ONLY BY HIS FRIENDS
AS 'DEFENDER'!



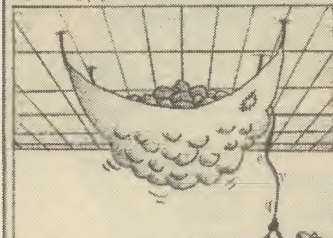
SUDDENLY THE DOOR IS BLOWN
OUT!



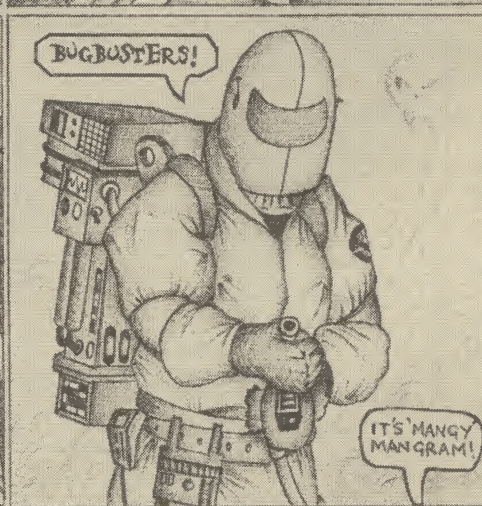
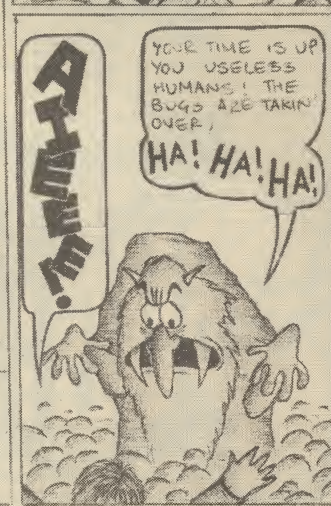
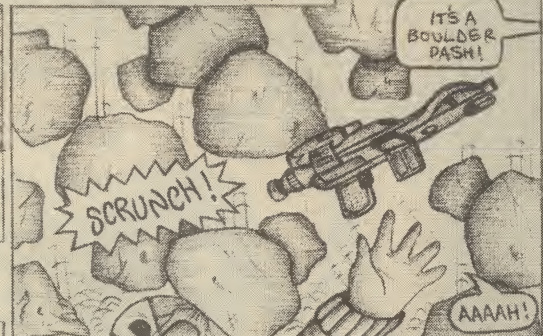
JR BEGAN TO DISPERSE THE BUGS WITH HIS LASER...



ROCKFORD WAS PREPARED FOR A COUNTER-ATTACK...



THE BUGS CONTINUE TO
CAUSE HAVOC FOR THE
FOLLOWING HOUR...





HE'S GOT A POSITRON COLLIDER!!

KRRZZZZT!

ONE BY ONE THE BUGS WERE FRAZZLED INTO OBLIVION...

KRRZZZZT!

LYDD KNEW WHAT WAS THE CAUSE OF THIS HAVOC.

ONE OF OUR TRUCKS CONTAINING RADIOACTIVE SLUDGE OVERTURNED AND CONTAMINATED A NEARBY RESERVOIR. WATER FROM THAT LAKE IS SENT ALL OVER SHROPSHIRE. WE MANAGED TO CUT IT OFF IN THE BUT SOME ESCAPED AND WE'VE TRACED IT TO THE ART ROOM AT THE CRASH OFFICES. OLIVER FREY COULD HAVE USED SOME TO DO SOME PAINTING OR DRAWING!!

ST CLIVE

THE LAST OF THE RIOTERS WAS SOON DELT WITH...

YAARGH!!

KRRZZZZT!

POOR OLD RODGER KEAN WAS SITTING IN THE CORNER.

I'M RUINED!

FEET!

BLEET!

RWA!

PAUL SUMNER

'SCUSE ME, BUT IS THIS THE ZZAP! / CRASH OFFICES? I'M THE NEW REVIEWER.

AFTER A WHILE RODGER DID RECOVER AND WENT ON TO EDIT BOTH MAGAZINES AGAIN. LLOYD GOT HIS PATRIGE AND JULIAN, ROD AND THE OTHERS SURVIVED AND CONTINUED TO WORK AS REVIEWERS, ETC. ... AS FOR THE BUGS - NOTHING WAS HEARD OF THEM AGAIN... (EXCEPT ON THE PAGES OF CRASH)

? The End ?

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3. Basketball	20. Solar Ship	38. Inferno
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5. Breakout	22. Cars	40. Voyager
6. Crusher	23. Stomper	41. Sketch Pad
7. Startrek	24. Pinball	42. Blitz
8. Martian Knockout	25. Cavern	43. Fishing Mission
9. Boggles	26. Laser	44. Mystical Diamonds
10. Alien Attack	27. Alien	45. Galaxy Defence
11. Lunar Landing	28. Cargo	46. Cypher
12. Maze Eater	29. The Race	47. Jetmobile
13. Microtrap	30. The Skull	48. Barrel Jump
14. Motorway	31. Orbit	49. Attacker
15. Labyrinth	32. Munch	50. Space Mission
16. Skittles	33. Bowls	
17. Race Track	34. Raiders	
	35. Field	

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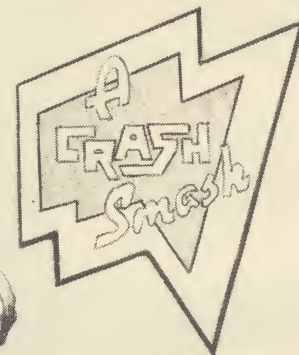


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BY
PAUL MALLINSON
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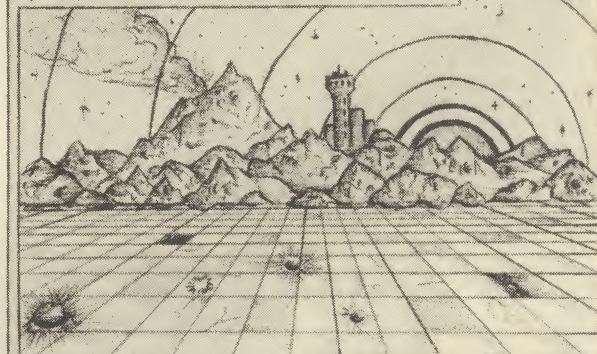
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WOTSIT?

DUNNO!





AT THE BOTTOM IT WAS PITCH BACK... A MATCH IS STRUCK

I CAN'T SEE A THING!

GROOOWL!

WHAT WAS THAT?!
QUICK, LIGHT A MATCH!

GRRRR!

UHP!

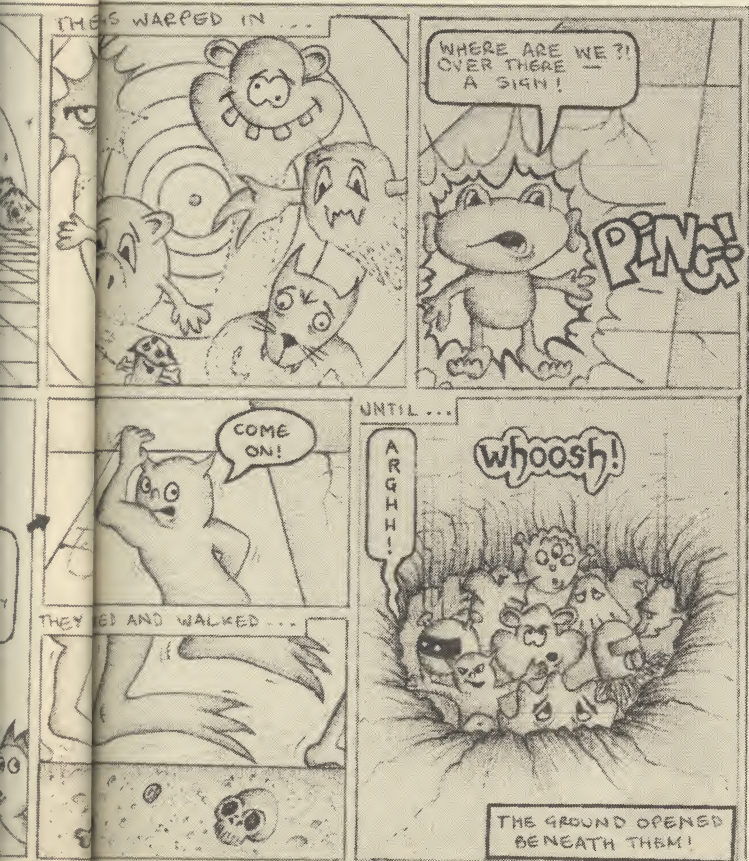


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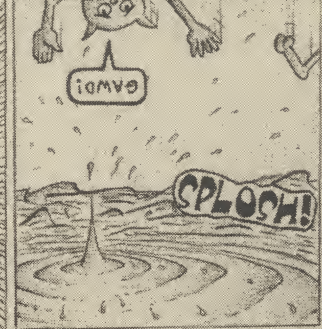
THE LEDGE GIVES WAY!



THEY FALL...



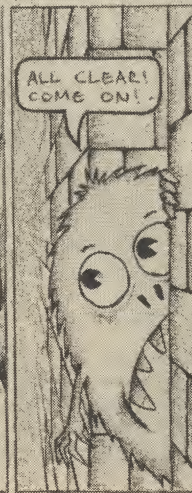
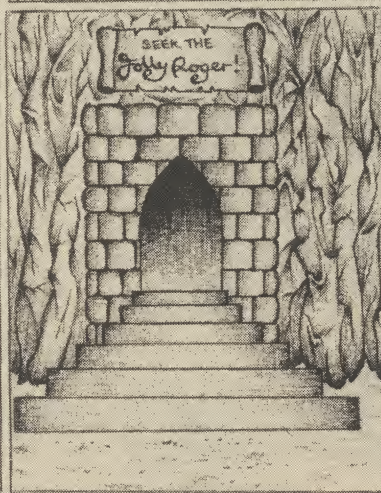
INTO A HIDDEN RIVER BELOW!



THEY DRIFT DOWN THE RIVER FOR A NUMBER OF MINUTES. THEY ARE DUCKED AND BEATEN BY THE RAGING WATER UNTIL...



THEY ARE BEACHED ON DRY LAND.



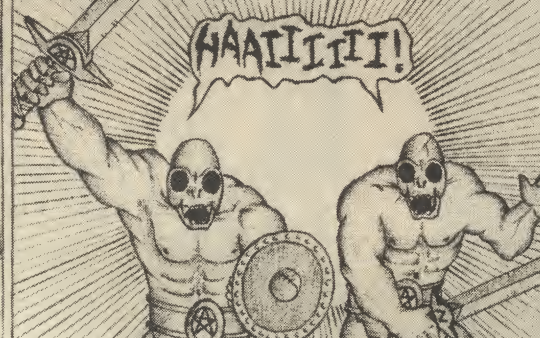
THEY ENTER THE CASTLE...



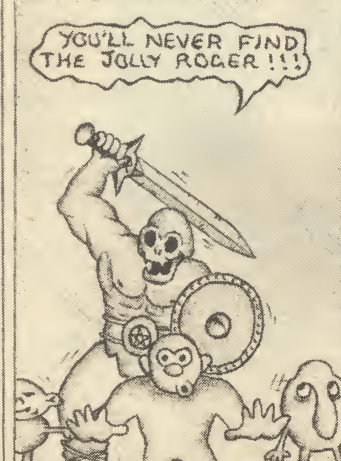
A BRIGHT LIGHT APPEARS!



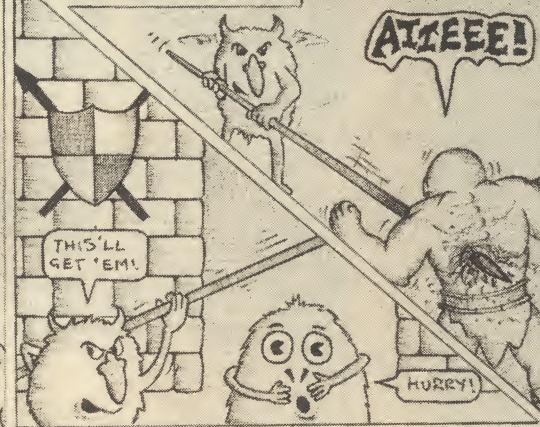
FIGURES EMERGE FROM WITHIN IT...



THE BUNS DISPERSE...



THE MONSTER IS SKEWERED ON THE SPEAR TAKEN FROM THE WALL!





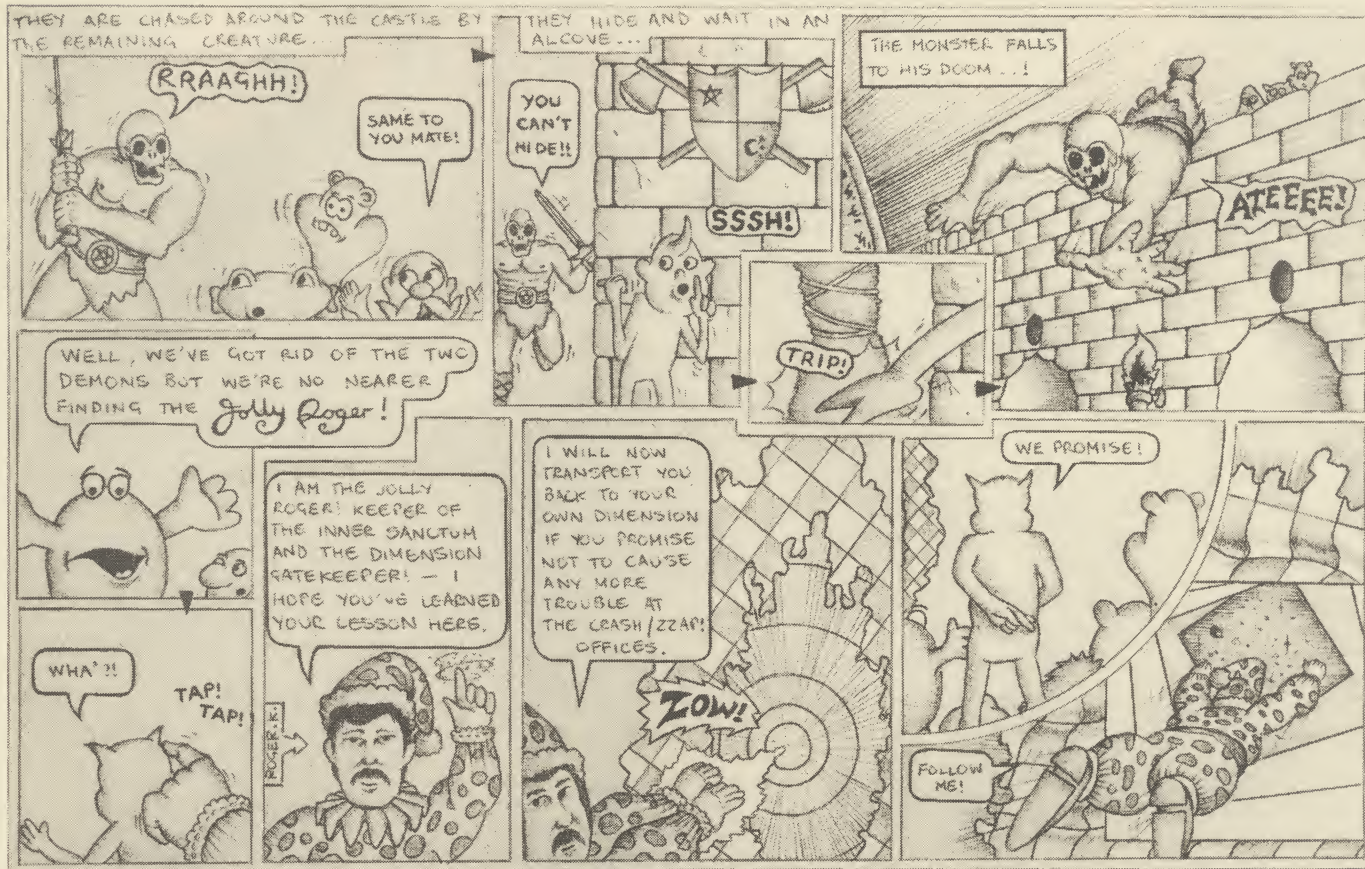
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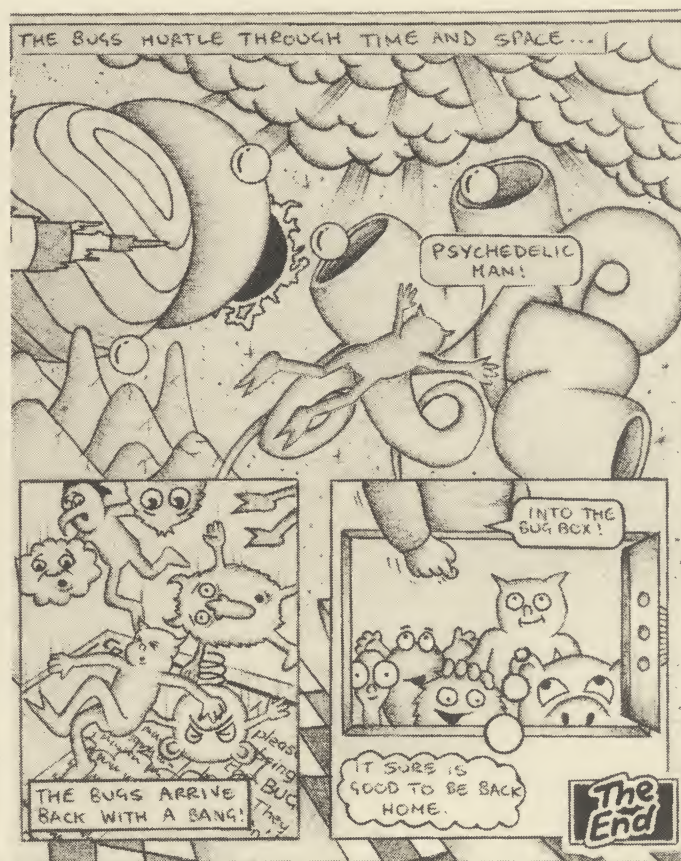
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The nice fellows at **Micro Musical** in Coventry, who make a MIDI interface for the Spectrum, have decided to enter into the festive spirit and offer CRASH readers the chance to win some musical prizes.

Micro Musical's MIDI interface takes advantage of **Romantic Robot's** music composing software, *Music Typewriter*, and allows you to control MIDI instruments with your Spectrum, composing and editing tunes off-line with the *Music Typewriter*. The interface package, (reviewed in the November issue) includes a cassette copy of *Music Typewriter*, software to drive the interface and a micro-drive conversion program as well as the hardware itself, and normally sell for around the £100 mark.

And the Casio CZ101 — a synth with a five octave range and eight pre-set voices — can be found in the shops for around £350. Not surprisingly, it is MIDI compatible. Micro Musical are offering a complete package, containing everything you need to start making some very res-

pectable music with your Spectrum, as the top prize in this Christmas Comp. A Casio CZ101 and a Micro Musical MIDI interface will soon be in the hands of a lucky CRASH reader.

Being generous to a fault, Micro Musical are also going to give away a couple of their MIDI interface packs as consolation prizes to runners up.

Our In-House Musical Maestro, Jon Bates, has been telling you about MIDI in TECH NICHE for a few months now. He's come up with a bijou quizette to test your attention — and knowledge of MIDI and things musical. Jon's set seven questions for you to ponder, and once you've come up with the answers, jot them down on the entry form and whizz it off to MIDI COMP, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB to arrive by 30th January 1986. Who knows, you could be up there on stage with some of the rich and famous synthesiser players after a little practice. Remember your 'umble Competition Minion if you do, won't you?

THE MICRO MUSICAL MIDI QUIZ

1) MIDI is an acronym for:

- A Musical Instrument Digital Interface
- B Manhattan Island Digital Instruments
- C Musical Input Default Interface

2) Real-time sequencing is:

- A Joining songs together to run one after another
- B The micro memorising the tune as you play it
- C Several tunes played at the same time by the micro

3) Which of these synthesisers will not plug in to a MIDI system:

- A Yamaha DX7
- B Korg Poly 800
- C Mini Moog

4) How many synthesisers can a MIDI system control:

- A Eight
- B Sixty-four
- C Sixteen

5) What is a MIDI "System Exclusive":

- A Something you have designed yourself
- B Something used between synthesisers made by the same manufacturer
- C MIDI transmission on only one channel

6) The idea of MIDI was conceived and formulated in:

- A 1969
- B 1981
- C 1984

7) Micro Musical's system is monophonic. What does Monophonic mean:

- A Only one sound can be used
- B Only one note can be sounded at any one time
- C Only one synthesiser can be used at a time





LLOYD MANGRAM'S LOOK BACK AT 1985

In the last Christmas Special 'Look Back', I said 84 was probably the year of CRASH, but as during 85 our sales per month rose from 49,000 to over 100,000 copies, it seems I was happily pessimistic about the year to come. Now it is passed — and what a year it has been!

Last year I was able to spot some trends — the death of the arcade shoot em up, the software slump, the dramatic improvement in software programming and the rise of the TV/Film/Game link up.

During 85 I think it would be fair to say that the arcade shoot em up made a significant come back, the software slump continued with many big and small companies vanishing, software programming techniques continued to improve and the TV/Film/Game tie-ins added books and commercial enterprise endorsements to become the most important aspect in games marketing. I'll be looking at all these trends as they appear month by month, starting with the 84/85 Christmas issue, which was really our January 85 edition.

JANUARY

It's becoming a tradition that the year should begin with the end, ie *Ultimately*. Play The Game dashed out with the dual release of *Underwulde* and *Knight Lore*. It was a bit 'controversial' in the sense that the high price tag remained and there were those who said *Underwulde* was too similar to *Sabrewulf* despite the former being turned upright. *Knight Lore* was a different matter with its spanking new 3D interactive graphics ('filmation') which got around the fact that the game itself wasn't so big.

Fantasy had good pre-sales of their trilogy first part, *Backpackers Guide to the Universe*, partly thanks to early publicity in CRASH, but the review wasn't that hot because, despite very pretty graphics by **Stewart Ruecroft** and some amusing ideas from **Bob Hamilton**, the action content seemed to be lacking and the zoo-strategical element wasn't sufficient. However, it looked like a promising start to what would eventually build into a gigantic three-part game — but it was never realised. In the February issue we coolly reviewed *Drive In* and shortly afterwards *Fantasy* ceased to exist.

Software Projects had been a bit quiet, but in January had two games on the go, *Astronut* and *Lode Runner*, both reasonably well received critically but under

-advertised and neither seemed to seriously grab the public's attention. Instead, the Soft Proj ad budget went on their **Software Super Savers**, latest in the growing line of low-cost games. Despite good sales, budget games were still a bit of a joke (apart from one or two of *Firebird's*), and with games like *Fred's Fan Factory* and *Moon Lighter* among the six released, **Software Super Savers** didn't seem to be breaking the tradition very much, but at least some of them were quite difficult to play.

Wanted: Monty Mole (CRASH readers' Best Platform Game from 84) had put **Gremlin Graphics** right on top, but their *Spectrum Potty Pigeon* was a bit of a disappointment in the New Year, although it was an original re-working of Crowther's already weak CBM64 version. Throughout the year, **Gremlin** would try to recapture the fresh spirit of *Monty* without complete success until Peter Harrap's true follow up *Monty on the Run*.

Not unlike *Ultimate*, **Vortex** is another software company whose reputation rests on few and usually good games written by **Costa Panayi**. Their follow-up to *TLL* was *Cyclone*. It employed very similar 3D graphics to the former game with the addition of a slight strategical element, but generally we felt there was no significant advance made and it seemed to lack the lustre of excitement needed to make it a big game.

ZZAP! 64's hero Rockford made his first appearance on the Spectrum in *Boulder Dash*, a game I thought absolutely marvellous despite its initially

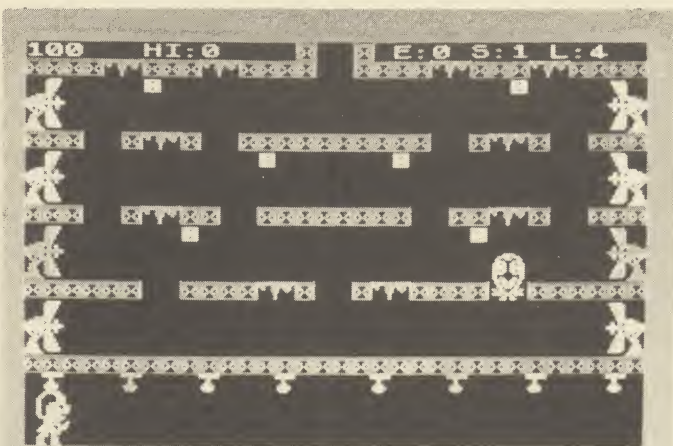
primitive-looking graphics. To play it was to become instantly addicted. It came from State Soft but was marketed by **Front Runner**, K-Tel's re-named and somewhat short-lived software company.

Two big releases this month were (finally) **Atarisoft's Pole Position** and **Domark's Eureka!**. Atari had a difficult task to beat the many previous releases all based on their road-racing arcade hit, and in fact they didn't really manage — the game was reasonable but too late. They did try an abortive earlier release at the 84 PCW Show, but criticism was so heavy it was withdrawn for improvements to be made. *Eureka!*, the multi-part adventure with a £25,000 prize for the first to complete it, was described as a real game despite the hype, but **Derek Brewster** didn't agree. However he did like the second ever release from **Dorcas** (formerly Doric), *Runes of Zandos*, but sadly the Distribu-

enlarged edition of Pokes. Robin was to become a fixture if not exactly a fitting from this point on, and the bane of my life (but that's another story).

FEBRUARY

February saw a few major releases, four from **Ocean**, still chasing that seemingly elusive CRASH Smash. The worthiest was probably *Gift From the Gods*, the first game from a new team called **Denton Designs**, who were all ex-Imagine programmers, partly financed by Ocean and soon to delight with several more games. The best was *Match Day*, the football simulation to beat them all, and a game many readers felt we dismissed unfairly without it being a Smash. The third was *Hunchback II*, not perhaps as delightful graphically as *Hunch-*



tion network failed to see eye to eye with CRASH and the adventure never received the exposure and sales it deserved — very like **Mizar's Out of the Shadows**.

Two other games are worth a mention — **Steve Davis Snooker** from **CDS** and *The Prince* from **CCS**. The snooker game was a typical example of endorsement games, using a well known personality to help sell a product, in this case one of the best ever snooker/pool simulations. *The Prince* went some way to prove that sponsorship (The Cambridge Awards) can result in good programs.

The only other item of note, is that this issue saw the first column from **Robin Candy**, an

back, but a better game to play and at least it didn't earn the nickname Hunchbug like the first one did. The fourth was another comeback in the form of *Kong Strikes Back*, an interesting but slightly indifferent game that lacked content but proved fairly tough.

Hewson Consultants came out with *Technician Ted* and proved that platform games could be tougher and better than *Jet Set Willy*. The public seemed to like it as well and it made the charts in a big way, upsetting those software houses who had turned the programmers down on the grounds that the game

was merely a Willy clone. **Firebird** proved they could release non-budget games in *Buggy Blast* and made a move towards reinstating the shoot em up with knobs on. **Elite** did the same with their next TV tie-in *Airwolf* and sparked some controversy — CRASH liked the game because it was tough (though not very big), whereas some other mags slated it as absolute rubbish. It did pretty well in the charts though.

But the two biggest releases in the sense of expectancy were **Legend's** *The Great Space Race* and **Beyond's** *Doomdark's Revenge*. *Alas*, the former turned out to be the grandest flop in games software history — for once every magazine critic and virtually every reader was in agreement, the box was fine, the contents amazingly poor. *Beyond*, of course, fared much better and **Mike Singleton's** follow up to state-of-the-art *Lords of Midnight* was an even better program (though some readers disagreed). The other big hype release was the Spectrum version of *Ghostbusters*. This **Activision** 'mega tie-in' has been claimed as the biggest seller of all time — perhaps, however we felt that the great CBM64 sound track covered a lack of real game, and this was more strongly highlighted on the Spectrum with a flat and inadequate rendering of the disco hit song.

On the budget front, **Mastertronic** came of age with an excellent platform/maze/adventure game called *Finders Keepers*, upsetting some cherished beliefs (including some of ours) that budget software couldn't crack it, while a relatively new house, **Dynavision** chased the definitely elusive 'Zaxxon' game with a similar rendition called *Havoc* — we felt it was pretty poor.

A quiet behind-the-scenes battle for the TV quiz series 'Blockbusters' came into the open when **Macsen** released a game of the same name, properly licenced, and forced **Compusound** to change their earlier version to something else. This turned out to be *Wender Bender*, marketed by **Ranks High**. They bullied us for some time to re-review *Wender Bender* on the grounds that they had had a raw deal, having received permission to do 'Blockbusters' in the first place. Eventually we did re-review it, only to find that Ranks High suddenly weren't answering the phone.

Another battle loomed within the pages of CRASH as a result

of Derek's dismissive review of **Interceptor's** adventure *Jewels of Babylon*. One of the directors of the company rang and became quite insulting on the phone about both the review, CRASH and Derek Brewster. Roger Kean, as is his wont, replied stinging in the following issue.

MARCH

March saw six major games with widely differing appeal. **Firebird** kicked off with another large game in their 'Gold' range. After some frenzied last minute name changing, it emerged as *Gyron*, a mega-maze game with a Porsche as a prize to the first completion. Although reviewed in March, readers had to wait some time for its actual release. Shoot em ups hit the vogue in a big way with *Moon Cresta* from **Incentive**, the first time this venerable and difficult arcade original had turned up on a home computer.

Micromania hit gold with their maze shoot em up *Project Future*, but sadly it was to be **Micromania's** last appearance and within another two months they were gone, owed a fortune by the collapsing distributor, **Tiger**. **Mikro-Gen's** fortunes, however, never looked better with the release of another Wally Week program, the multi-character graphic adventure *Everyone's a Wally*. The game was reckoned to be good enough not to need the song of the same name by Mike Berry, and if Mikro-Gen had hoped it might make the pop charts they were to be disappointed — however it did for a while become a regular musical catchphrase on the Steve Wright Show on Radio 1.

A company better known for their CBM64 games was **Bubble Bus** who, with their second ever Spectrum release *Wizard's Lair*, made a Smash. Despite the game's visual similarity to *Atic Atac* and *Sabrewulf*, in play it was sufficiently exciting and difficult to earn its own spurs.

For adventurers, Derek thought **Spiderman** from **Adventure International** was a worthy hit from the Scott Adams stable. Sadly, the Steve Jackson games promised from Ad Int and reported in the previous issue, have never materialised (although they are still being worked on). Another adventure (one from a time previous) well regarded was *castle Blackstar*, slightly rewritten from its original marketing, and put out by

CDS.

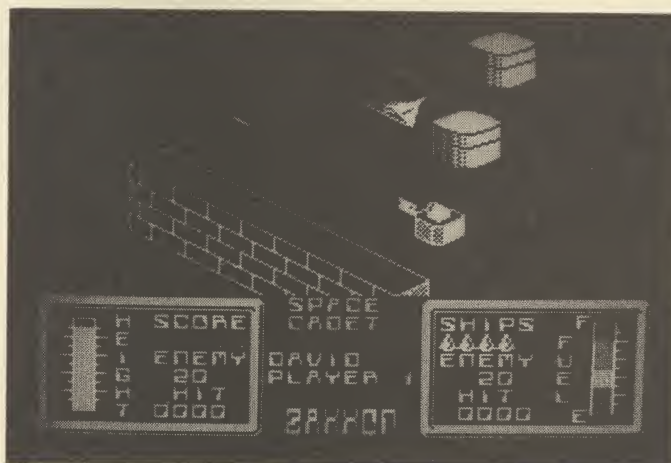
US Gold, riding high with their rash of American Commodore games, were not doing quite so well with the Spectrum conversions. This month saw the release of *Blue Max* and (finally) the real *Zaxxon*. Both were disappointing, the latter proving that 'Zaxxon' was still to be done properly on the Spectrum.

Melbourne House offered us an oddity in *Hellfire*, a three-part game with good graphics but some strange gameplay — it didn't really hit home. Another game that didn't hit (probably because it simply wasn't different enough) was **Artic's** *Mutant Monty*, and the lack of advertising to back it up seemed to point up Artic's continuing decline as a software house. **Virgin Games** was another house in some decline (at least on the Spectrum although *Strangeloop* for the CBM64 and *Sorcery* for the Amstrad did very well), but their strategy/simula-

scoop.

APRIL

April was an interesting month not so much for the volume of software produced, which was actually quite low, but because **Ultimate** released the well advertised and eagerly awaited *Alien 8* — and within days, the letters began to flow. 'It's a rip off', 'Knight Lore in space with no improvements' were typical of some of the comments. But many thought otherwise, the CRASH team included, and decided that *Alien 8* was an improvement. Besides which, a fair person might have realised that after spending so long developing the 3D graphics used in *Knight Lore*, **Ultimate** was bound to employ them again. In fact within a few months many other software



tion based on the evil doings of the pop business and called *The Biz* was well received. Evil doings were responsible for getting Monty Mole into prison, but **Gremlin Graphics** still hadn't recaptured the right form for their hero in *Chris Kerry's Monty is Innocent* — it looked as though it required an escape to get things moving again.

Ski Star 2000 was one interesting program we reviewed, one of the first to start using icons to help the player, in this case to redesign the ski slopes. It was from **Richard Shepherd** — an unusual departure for them. But the news everyone wanted was the password to access the very carefully protected second program on **Design Design's** 84 hit *Dark Star*. I was able to 'exclusively' reveal that to see *Spectacle* you had to type in 'Everyone's a nervous wreck'. I was thrilled — my first ever

houses were to have a go at similar interactive 3D graphics, proving, if nothing else, that the industry believed **Ultimate** were right.

Gremlin Graphics gave us a new hero in *Sam Stoot (Safe-breaker)*, related in theory to Monty Mole, but again it didn't quite hit the spot. **Mastertronic** also dipped a bit with *Chiller*, a game that had done reasonably well on the 64 but translated poorly to the Spectrum. **Ocean's** offering was the intriguing *Pud Pud*, a game that was definitely odd odd.

TV tie-ins continued unabated with the masters **Elite** and their *Dukes of Hazzard* and the less often heard of **Red Shift** and a strategical adventure based on the BBC's *Tripods*. *Dukes of Hazzard* seemed typical of **Elite's**

recent games, pretty good graphically but lacking in content. Both Derek Brewster and Angus Ryall slammed *Tripods* into the ground. Strategy and tie-ins turned out to be a winner, however, for **Argus Press Software** with the release of their tense adventure based on the movie *Alien* — the first CRASH Smash from Angus.

US Gold finally struck pay dirt and a Smash with *Raid Over Moscow*, a game that finally presented a reasonable 'Zaxxon' style screen among others, and was successfully hyped by the press as 'controversial' because of its Kremlin-attacking scenario. The 'new look' shoot em up was given a boost by **System 3's** *Death Star Interceptor*, which we thought was pretty good, especially the space sequence, but which some other mags regarded as utter rubbish. **Romantic Robot**, better known for utilities, surprised everyone by releasing *Wiggler* and getting a CRASH Smash, while **Micromega** surprised us by releasing *A Day in the Life* (of Sir Clive) and

made much impact and it looked as though another established and major house was in search of the right product. Unlike **Melbourne House** who released *Starion* and for a while looked as though they might have beaten Firebird onto the market with an *Elite* like game. The 3D vector graphics were just about the fastest and smoothest yet seen on the Spectrum, and the addition of historical puzzle games made it quite unique.

MAY

In fact May was a pretty good month. **Hewson Consultants** came out with Steve Turner's follow up game *Dragontorc of Avalon* and it was even better than its forerunner, *Avalon*. **US Gold** had two smashes in the arcade conversions of *Spy Hunter* and the pre-karate rage *Bruce Lee*. A software house that had been a bit quiet since its Ket Trilogy adventures, was **Incentive**, but they put that right



disappointing us for the first time. **Addictive Games** had lived successfully off *Football Manager* for an eternity, so the release of a similar game based on the software business and called *Software Star* was greeted with some interest, but it failed to live up to the more exciting world of soccer.

One of the other 'majors', **Bug-Byte** gave us a combo had been quiet for some time, came out with two very different games, *Fantastic Voyage* and *Mighty Magus*, but although they were both quite good in their own ways, neither really

with the furious puzzle game *Confuzion*, and at long last **Ocean** made its second CRASH Smash with *World Baseball Series* although that was under the newly acquired name of **Imagine**. Even **Elite**, about whom we had been despairing of a game to match the graphics, came up with a strong product in the endorsed *Grand National* — the best yet horse racing game and one which boasted excellent equestrian animation. On the adventure front, Derek was pretty thrilled with **Level 9's** latest graphic and text *Emerald Isle*. By and large, everyone was so pleased that even Robin Candy went psychedelic in the Playing Tips.

JUNE

A mixed bag this month with some disappointments and one or two pleasant surprises. The one 'dead cert' was **Beyond's** *Shadowfire*, the first fully icon-driven graphics adventure. There was a danger that the novelty of the icons might disguise the lack of a game, but **Denton Designs** did a good job

Komplex, but despite its programming worthiness and its immense size, it still seemed to lack something in play. **A & F** were also back with a follow up, trying to recapture the enigmatic success of *Chuckie Egg* with the appropriately named *Chuckie Egg 2*. In additive terms it wasn't a patch on the first game, but it did offer numerous platform leaping locations and plenty of adventure elements to keep fans happy for some hours. Another follow up



and the game matched its tremendous look, although Dentons themselves admitted to wanting more game elements in the follow up when they got going on it. The other Smashes for the month fell to adventure and strategy with **Gremlins from Adventure International**, **Games Workshop's** *Runestone*, a 'landscaping' adventure to rival *Lords of Midnight* and *Witches Cauldron*, an adventure based on **Mikro-Gen's** famous Wally graphics and reviewed a bit later than it should have been as it proved too difficult for Derek to get through without help! And on the strategy front-line, Angus was pleased with *Arnhem* from **CCS**, a company he had always regarded with mixed admiration and amusement for their dogged struggle to convince an uncaring world that war games could be fun. He was also surprised that **Lothlorien** turned in another worthy strategy game called *Overlords*. Lothlorien was about to be taken under the expanding wings of Argus Press Software — would it make any difference to their performance?

Legend fought back against the poor publicity generated by the flop of *The Great Space Race* by providing us with the graphically interesting 3D game

was *Falcon Patrol 2* from **Virgin Games** (although the original had only been on the 64). This was a disappointment, a rather thin game and graphics that didn't look as though they had progressed beyond Durell's much earlier *Harrier Attack*, which the game strongly resembled.

One surprise hit was *Tapper* from **US Gold**. The game appeared a month before on the 64 and looked like a difficult one to translate well, but the Spectrum version from **Platinum Productions** was well up to scratch despite the inevitable animation clashes, and proved to be one of those hugely and enjoyably frustrating no-win games and one of my personal favourites.

Tie-ins and endorsements were on the increase this month; after much pre-publicity, **DK'tronics** released *Minder*, their tie-in game, based on the Thames TV series of the same name. CRASH had seen one or two very early versions, and wasn't particularly impressed. A number of points made by Derek Brewster were passed back to the programmer, but in the event the finished game failed to excite us over much. Another

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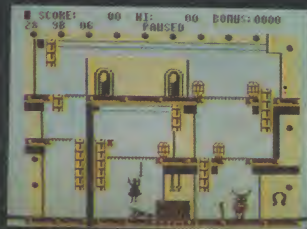
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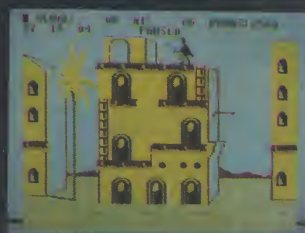
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tie-in was *Give my Regards to Broad Street*, a novel travel and search adventure with arcade overtones based on Paul McCartney's musical film, which **Argus Press Software** brought out under their 'Mind Games' series. As mentioned previously, there was *Gremlins*, our preview of *Frankie Goes to Hollywood*, *Jonah Barrington's Squash* and *911TS*. The latter, from **Elite** seemed to play too heavily on the graphics used in *Grand National* to be very different and the tie-in with Dunlop Tyres turned out to be more of a marketing element than it first seemed, in as much as the game had originally been developed purely for Dunlop. Dunlop also make sports equipment, possibly even Jonah Barrington's squash balls (I'm no expert!), which featured in the tough simulation by **Malcolm Evans** of **New Generation**.

On the budget front **Mastertronic** released the unpronounceable *Nonterraqueous*, not a bad big-maze semi-shoot em up, and to underline, as it were, the joke about budget software, **Firebird** came out with *Don't Buy This*, a compilation of the worst ever programs that had been sent in over the past few months. Naturally enough, it sold rather well.

JULY

Into the second half of the year; traditionally the first of the slump summer months. Yet Spectrum software was holding up very well and many more good quality games were being released than during the same months of last year. One which arrived too late to do it justice in a full review was **Odin's Nodes of Yesod**, so it merely got a Mangram and more of that later...

Tie-ins had a veritable field day with the big guns — *Rocky Horror Show* from **CRL** and *A View To A Kill* from **Domark**. The former, based on the decadent seventies stage show and film, did rather well to capture some of the film's feeling, and the graphics were pretty good too, sadly the game just lacked enough content to make it great. Domark's effort (programmed by Softstone, who took over Perfection Software, who produced the early CRASH success *Odyssey 1*) was far weaker. The three-part game followed some of Bond's exploits from the movie, but the game ideas were

thin, Bond looked like a stick insect and all the publicity over how much money Tony Crowther was paid to write the music was wasted on Spectrum owners anyway. Nevertheless, the CRASH review was pretty kind and the game was better on the Spectrum than on the 64.

A third tie-in, however, managed to be even more awful — *Super Gran* from **Tynesoft** sent the ageing maternal heroine of Tyne & Tees TV fame hurtling through landscapes of appalling graphics with a control over her actions that only a World War I flying ace would remember. Looking at *Super Gran* was like looking through a time tunnel and seeing the past — at least graphically it was. **Quicksilver** also held a mirror up to us in the beautiful looking *Glass*. It had some fine points but missed one or two in the shoot em up stakes and ended up giving a slight feeling of dissatisfaction on completing it. Mirrors seemed to be in the news when we Smashed *Dynamite Dan* from **Mirrorsoft**, one of my favourites (though Robin Candy has never agreed — his

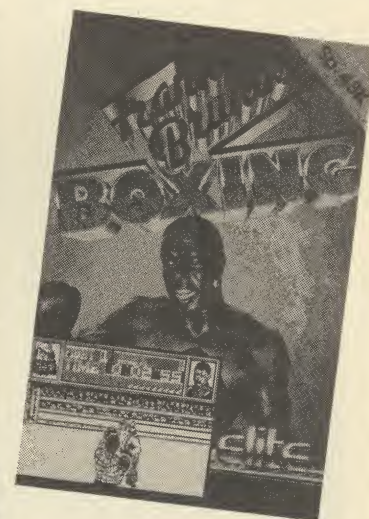
the rest of the graphics weren't up to much, the atmosphere it lent carried the rest of this enjoyable simulation along quite happily.

On the Smash side of things apart from *Dynamite Dan*, there was *Herbert's Dummy Run*, the enjoyable romp of Master Week through a department store full of **Mikro-Gen** arcade games, but with a tinge of warning that perhaps the Wally Weekers were getting a touch too similar in style and content; there was *Cauldron* from **Palace**, a hit on the 64 that had been really well translated to provide a broomstick 'Defender' and a very hard series of platform games; and surprise of the month was *Lothlorien's Battle of the Bulge*, their first under the Argus banner, which left Angus Ryall nonplussed with admiration for both Lothlorien and Argus, two companies for whom previously he had had few good things to say. But for many, the big thrill was **Gargoyle Games's** *Dun Darach*, starring Grego-celtic hero Cuchulainn in his second graphics adventure. It was a big thrill for then CRASH editor

colour clashing characters, but still managed to be addictive and difficult.

AUGUST

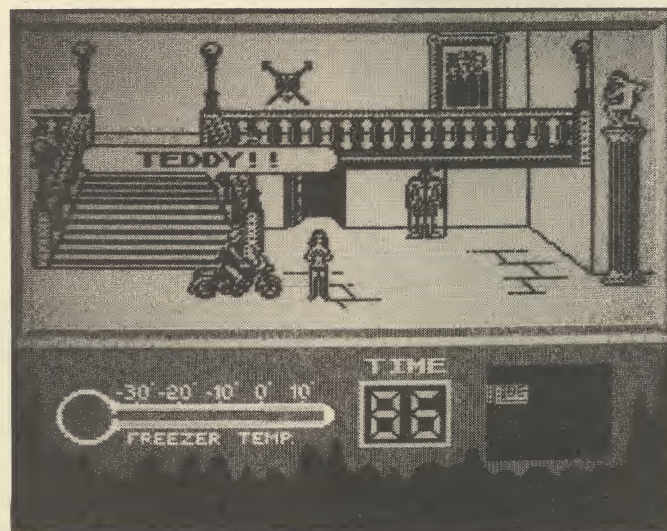
The August issue of CRASH suffered a bit of a setback when it ran into trouble with EMAP and their *Sinclair User* magazine



— but enough of that...

Somewhat belatedly, *Nodes of Yesod* got its airing and a CRASH Smash. The graphics, action and ideas all contributed to making a great game from **Odin** (who had previously been Thor). In fact there were some great Smashes in August. *Frankie Goes To Hollywood* arrived and proved again that **Denton Designs** could come up not only with an extraordinary mixture of fluent graphics but also with some extraordinary game ideas. They also gave **Ocean** (proper) a real CRASH Smash. Ocean got yet another through the **Imagine** label with *Hypersports*. Not to be outdone **Beyond** released the two totally hateable Mad Magazine espionage experts, the Black and White spies in *Spy vs Spy*. Once again, the graphics were excellent, using split screen simultaneous displays for the two players, but it was the humour (taken straight from Mad) that made the game a great one.

Clever graphics were also responsible for the slick presentation of the adventure Smash *The Fourth Protocol* released by **Hutchinsons** and programmed by **The Electronic pencil Company** — a name to be reckoned



tough luck). The graphics lifted this platform game above most others, but some clever innovations, incredibly tough gameplay and jolly music added the spice.

Endorsement of the month award went to **Alligata** for their *Jack Charlton's Match Fishing*. Some people reckon fishing is as interesting as watching a river cutting a valley, but the valleys are busy enough with weekend anglers and the sport is among the most popular. *Match Fishing* boasted an absolutely excellent lakeside scene by David Thorpe and, although

Roger Kean, who got credited on the inlay for inventing the idea of door numbers used in the game. This was one of Robin Candy's personal favourites, and I don't know whether that says more for him or less for the game (but at least he can spell Kookulainn, when I can't).

Two other games in July worthy of note were *Archon*, a weird mix of chess-like board game and arcade action from **Ariolasoft**, and *Super Pipeline II* by **Taskset**, a company venturing off the 64 onto the Spectrum for the first time. The game suffered in translation with

with in the future. here, for the first time, Macintosh-like business icons were used to drive the adventure along, and it worked a treat — so did the adventure.

The tendency to 'self copy' was once again rearing its head with all sorts of people about to release karate games, but first came the boxers. **Elite** produced just about their best ever game in the endorsed *Frank Bruno's Boxing*. The fluidity of the animation just had the edge over *Rocco*, a game from Spanish software house **Dinamic** and marketed here by **Gremlin Graphics**. Gremlin had won a battle with **Silversoft** for the rights to this and another game called *Profanation*, a very tough jump and seek game that was, in theory at least, the third part of a trilogy of which **Silversoft** ended up with only the first two parts, *Saimazoom* and *Baba Liba*. Gremlin Graphics got the best of the bargain.

We finally reviewed **Artic's** latest release *Paws*, having

except that it turned out to be 40 more rooms added onto the existing game and that was pretty disappointing, especially as programmer **Matthew Smith** had nothing much to do with it.

SEPTEMBER

The last month of this unusually busy summer turned out a handful of goodies. Everyone had been awaiting **Costa Panayi's** latest 3D developments, and expectations were well rewarded with *Highway Encounter* from **Vortex** — a very linear game with extraordinarily attractive graphics and a hero-bot looking not unlike a Dalek. It was voted a CRASH Smash within minutes, and protracted play didn't diminish the delight. **Gremlin Graphics**, after much pre-warning, launched the proper follow-up to their huge molar hit of last year by **Peter Harrap** — *Monty on the Run* followed a similar pattern to its

collect em up maze game with great graphics by **Stuart Ruecroft** (who had been responsible for the graphics in *Back-packer's*). Despite the obvious format, *On the Run* turned out to be likeable, fast and difficult and a Smash.

There were two 'red' releases in September, one an adventure and a Smash from ace writer-explorers **Level 9**, and one a flight simulator from **Database**. *Red Moon* impressed Derek as much for its indication of Level 9's durability as for the game's undoubted qualities of excitement, atmosphere and entertainment value. *Red Arrows* was another matter however, a disappointment after the drawn out wait for the program's release. It put you in the cockpit of a Red Arrow team jet, flying exhibition formation aerobatics. Unfortunately the simulation turned out slow and somewhat unrealistic.

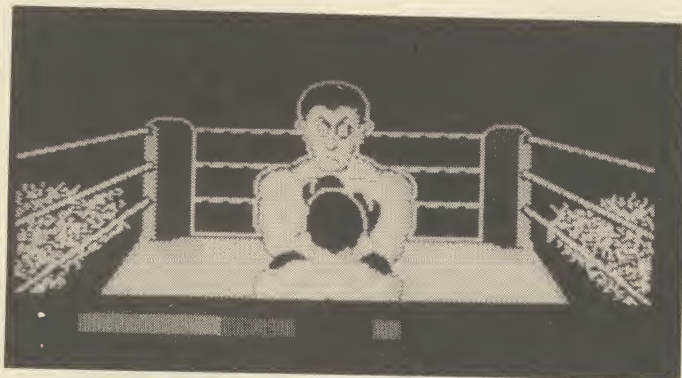
Probably biggest disappointment of the month, though, was **Ocean's** *Roland's Rat Race*, a TV tie-in with really very little tied into it. Thinly disguised as a platform/maze game, you had to untangle the knot of passages in search of Roland's kidnapped friends and get to TVAM on time. **US Gold** also turned out a disappointment in *Buck Rogers*, although a very good conversion from the 64, it lacked any real spark, not perhaps surprising in such an old arcade game.

However, another, even older game made its appearance on the computer in the form of *Cluedo* from **Leisure Genius** — the official version of this ever popular board game. The Spectrum version was rated pretty well, with everyone looking forward to the following release of *Monopoly*.

If the *Red Arrows* simulation was a let down, two others this month were not, **ASP's** *Nick Faldo Plays the Open* turned out to be the best golf game yet, using fashionable icons to make

setting up shots as easy as pie and comfortably realistic; while for choo choo fans, **Hewson Consultants' Southern Belle** gave us the freedom of the engine driver's footplate on an old steam locomotive doing the Brighton run. An unusual area for simulations, and one which led one reviewer to think it easier to control an aeroplane than a train! *Southern Belle*, however, captivated all those who had ever wanted to grow up and be an engine driver.

That more or less rounded up September except for **Domark's** release of our very own **Derek Brewster's** *Code Name Mat II*, the follow up, not surprisingly, to *Code Name Mat*. We had loved the latter game, with its complex 3D graphics, but the sequel seemed too similar to score heavily, and got hit hard by reviewers for not having 'advanced' with time. The resulting review upset Derek, a man who hardly ever complains unless it's about me, but at least it shut up critics who had made great capital of the fact that all his other games had been CRASH Smashes, and was something funny going on?



deemed it sensible to leave it until Artic had made up their minds what to call it. Originally named *Cats*, after the famous musical, Artic had trouble in obtaining copyright clearance so the name changed but the game didn't, and it was cute but hardly mega-stuff. *The Covenant* from **PSS** was much better as was **CRL's** unusual *Juggernaut* — the sort of vehicle that gets hung up under the low half-timbered frames of quaint Ludlow town. Biggest disappointment of the month, perhaps even the quarter, was *Jet Set Willy II*. **Software Projects** had, of course, scored an enormous hit with *Jet Set Willy*, and there was always rumoured to be a sequel on its way (Jet Set Willy and the Taxman — or something). So news of a second game was good news indeed,

predecessor, but there were more rooms and some of the nastiest little traps yet devised for the unwary platform gamer. It tended to rather over-shadow the other Gremlin release, written by **Chris Kerry**, *Metabolis*. I thought this attractive and unusual maze/search game deserved better than it got, and its sense of humour was refreshing.

One game based more on a humorous character than on incipient humour that just arrived in time to be reviewed and Smashed, was *Popeye* from **Dk'Tronics** by the venerable author **Don Priestly**. Not only did the game boast super large graphics, but ones that suffered no attribute problems.

Attractive graphics have characterised 1985, often giving new life to well tried ideas. The usually novel and innovative **Design Design** turned their hands (or **Graham Stafford's** hands) to a

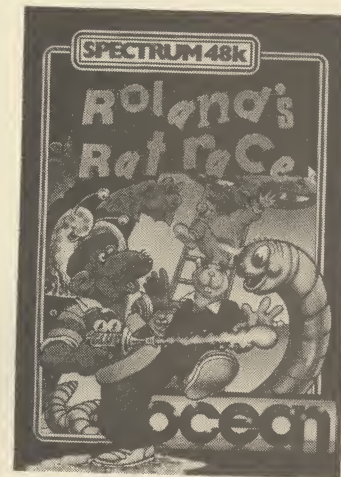
OCTOBER

As if to calm everyone down before Christmas, October turned out to be a bit arid with only the Spectrum version of *Way of the Exploding Fist* from **Melbourne House** really standing out. Of the long promised spate of self-copy karate games, this was the first to arrive. It converted from the 64 quite successfully, and playing it well meant combining hand and eye co-ordination skills with action in such a way as to offer plenty of enjoyment and mirror the real

martial art in as realistic manner as possible on a computer.

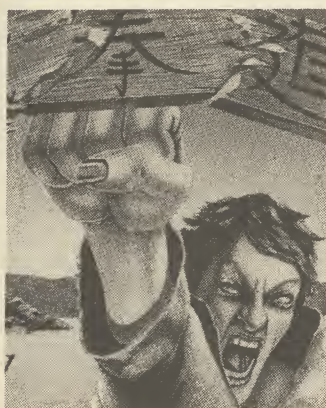
It's true that **Ultimate** scored with *Nightshade*, but nevertheless, there was an undertone in the reviewers' comments that suggested they were taking *Knight Lore*, *Alien 8* a bit too far, and that something original was required to revitalise the classic software house image. It also wasn't missed that a company other than Ultimate was credited with the programming...

The only other Smash was *Touchstones of Rhiannon*, an



adapation of the Robin Hood story from **Adventure International** and based heavily on the recent TV series.

There was a handful of 'solid' games, two from **US Gold** having been heralded for some time — *Dambusters* and *Bounty Bob*, both big hits on the 64, both slightly flawed on the Spectrum. *Bounty Bob* especially seemed unable to carry its cult status across from machine to machine and resulted merely in a good platform game. Beyond's



second label **Monolith** offered us a rockin' good time with *Rockford's Riot*, the follow up to very successful *Boulder Dash* which, while still a fine game, mostly contained the same gameplay elements as its predecessor.

It was left to Derek to discover the two most unusual games of the month in the adventure section, *The Rats* from book publishers **Hodder & Stoughton** and *The Secret of St Brides* by a dubious organisation purporting to be St Brides School for Young Ladies, whose packaging came complete with supporting literature of a slightly off beat British 'gels' school type a la St Trinians (a feeling reinforced by your playing the heroine, Trixie Trinian). *The Rats*, based on the best seller Herbert book, made a strange combination between adventure of the 'select an option' type and strategy covered in a thick custard of gory horror as the player waded knee-deep through the bloodied remains of rat-gnawed London (reminding me yet again why I left the place)!

Another slightly unusual game turned up from **PSS**, marketing a French pinball table construction kit under the name of *Macadam Bumper* (it led to the review compiler being able to use the joke: Language:

French machine code — yawn). With this you could play a preset table or redesign it. An excellent offering, but there's still room yet for a really flexible pinball designer program. We also reviewed a program from our old friends at **Eclipse** aimed at the then-about-to-be-current craze for comet spotting and aptly named *Halley's Comet*.

But if there were few heavenly bodies to be seen screaming across October's software sky, our forward-looking telescopes were trained on deep space at new games from **Gargoyle Games** and **Hewson Consultants**, an extraordinary looking one with the appropriately heavenly body name of *Tau Ceti* from **CRL** and one set on the Zoids planet from **Martech**...

NOVEMBER

Hewson's Astroclone saw veteran 3D proger **Steve Turner** back in space from his sojourn in the remote past of Maroc and pitted once again against those indefatigable foe the Seiddab in a complex combination of space shoot em up and 3D room exploration game. To some degree Steve and the men from **Gargoyle Games** seem to have been moving on parallel courses in recent months and *Astroclone* had uncanny similarities to Gargoyle's release *Marsport*. This introduced us to a new hero, John Kepler Marsh and the return of Gargoyle to space. *Marsport* was the first of a

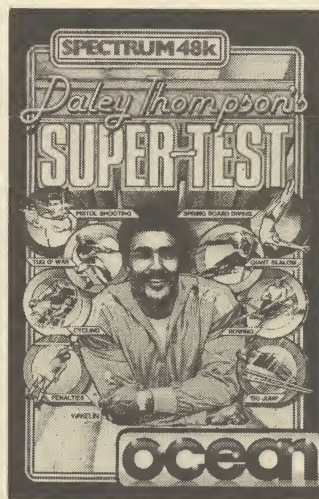
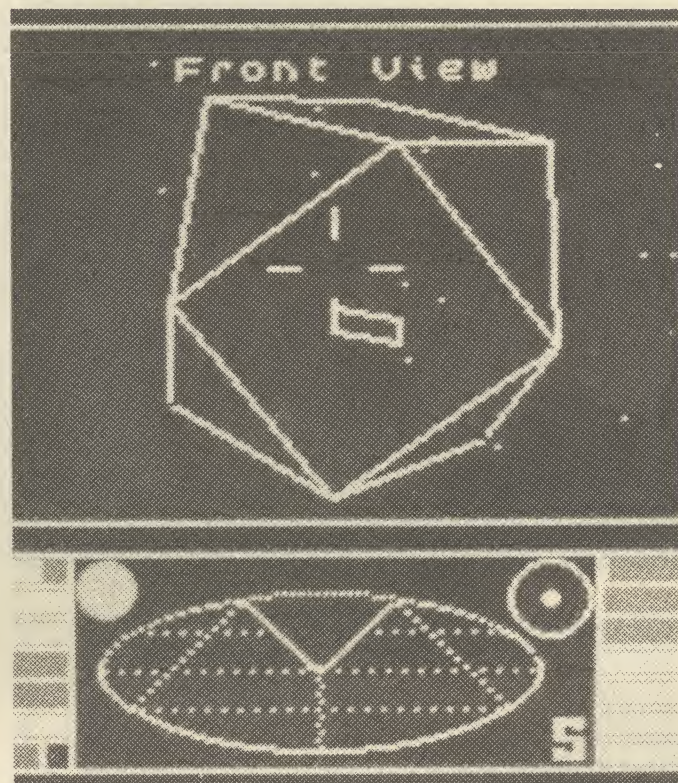


planned trilogy of space games called *The Siege of Earth*, complete with an excellent background story from the pen of **Greg Follis** about man's meeting with aliens and its consequent results. The subtle additions to the previous *Dun Darach* together with Gargoyle's inimitable mix of puzzle, pun and and action made *Marsport* a sure fire hit.

Tau Ceti and *Zoids* got previewed, but **The Edge** got *Fairlight* out for us to rave over. Here was another 3D room exploring game with puzzles to be solved, using graphics that improved upon those employed by *Ultimate* and one in which objects behaved realistically in interaction with the playing character. *Fairlight* has been the outstanding achievement of The Edge to date. Turning the page of that issue, another Smash emerged — *Elite*. **Firebird** had purchased this cult BBC game for a fabulous sum from the programmers, converted it to the 64, where it was well received, and

had spent considerable time making the Spectrum version even better (though alas, not the music)! It's the sort of game (space trader/shoot em up) you either love to death or hate. If the former, then you can't put it down for months.

Bubble Bus also flew us to the deepest regions of space and a black hole with **Stephen Crow's** follow up to his excellent *Wizard's Lair* called *Starquake*. It had visual overtones of *Underwurde* and the more recent *Nodes of Yesod* in its superb graphics and offered a high degree of playability with many neat touches and novel ideas.



Back on Earth, **Melbourne House** disappointed us slightly with *Fighting Warrior*, a sort of ancient Egyptian martial arts program, where it was felt that there wasn't quite enough going on to overcome the fact that much of its content was actually the 'Exploding Fist' control mode.

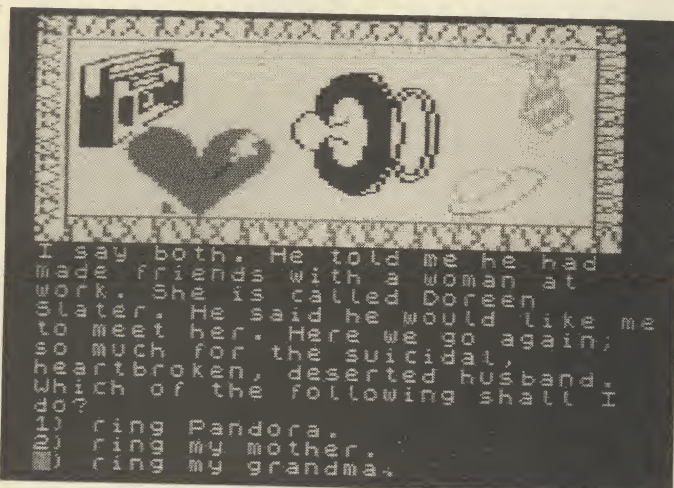
Ocean, too, brought us and our joysticks back to earth with a thump and *Daley Thompson's Super Test*. Although undeniably fun, *Super Test* really offered nothing new over *Decathlon* and was over-shadowed by *Hypersports*.

US Gold's November game was another monster hit from the 64, *Impossible Mission*, but like its stable mate *Bounty Bob*, it somehow failed to carry the adulation with it over to the Spectrum, resulting in a respectable enough and tough platform/exploring game.

We also saw the first ever release of a new software name, **Electric Dreams**, backed by Activision and fronted by ex-Quicksilver boss, **Rod Cousens**. The game was called *Riddler's Den* and sparked a bit of a controversy with US Gold, who were also launching a budget label under the same name. *Riddler's Den* was a good start, priming the market for their December release...

convinced everyone of its Smash merits. Derek enjoyed (and Smashed) the **Melbourne House** spoof 'adventure' *Terrormolinos*, although he failed to rate **Beyond's** *Sorderon's Shadow* quite as highly as the Mike Singleton *Midnight* trilogy which it vaguely resembled. On the other hand he gave a Smash to *The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole* from **Mosaic/Level 9**.

And that just about brings us up to date. So what characterises 1985 as a software year? One thing that stands out to my mind is the way that this summer software kept on coming out, and good software too. 3D has been almost an obsession with many programmers working in all its aspects and proving that last year's 'comprehensive'

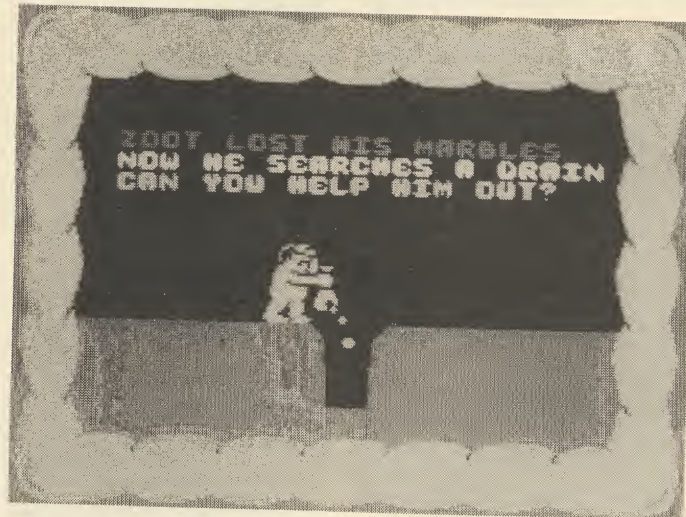


DECEMBER

Last month is still fresh in everyone's minds, so I won't dwell too long on its bright points, which were numerous. At last *Tau Ceti* arrived and Smashed, **Sandy White** (of *Ant Attack* fame) gave us **Electric Dreams' Smash I, of the Mask**. In similar visual vein, **Melbourne House** came up with *Gyroscope* and got a Smash. **Microsphere** surprised us with the quiet release of their skool follow up, *Back to Skool* and proved you can add even to a fabulous program and get another Smash. **Durell** got one as well with their *Critical Mass*, and at long, long last **Digital Integration** brought out *Tomahawk* — the game we waited almost 18 months to see. This flight simulator showed some advances over *Fighter Pilot* and

3D article is way out of date! Gameplay has been worked on very carefully too, supporting our earlier optimistic view that computer games would not die, only improve and change their nature. But to balance the increasing complexity of games like *Dun Darach* and *Frankie Goes to Hollywood*, we've also seen the rebirth of the classic shoot em up — except the graphics have been vastly improved over earlier efforts. Software prices have crept up of course, but budget software has come of age with **Mastertronic** leading the way, and on the pricier end of the range, we've generally been given much more for our money to make up for it.

Some software houses have disappeared — or been swallowed up or revamped, **Bug-Byte** for instance, one of the oldest companies, has just re-emerged as a budget label for Argus Press Software, having been bought out of receivership. Some well known names like **Artic** and, sadly, **Micromega**



seem to have faded into the background and some companies have dropped out wilfully, like the sadly missed **Games Workshop**, who after toying with some games and producing some excellent material, chose to get out of software altogether. But new names have emerged, often with startlingly strong product.

This year has also seen the growth of professional programming design teams like **Denton Designs** and **The Electronic Pencil Company**, who write games but don't market them, leaving that to software houses who buy their talent in. In itself

this is a fine idea, leaving the designers to concentrate on doing what they are best at — designing good games. I would say 1985 has been a vintage year for the quality and range of games, and current trends bode well for 1986. Games in the pipeline are promising indeed — we still await *Zoids* from **Martech** as I write — and the software business seems content with the results and hopeful of next year.

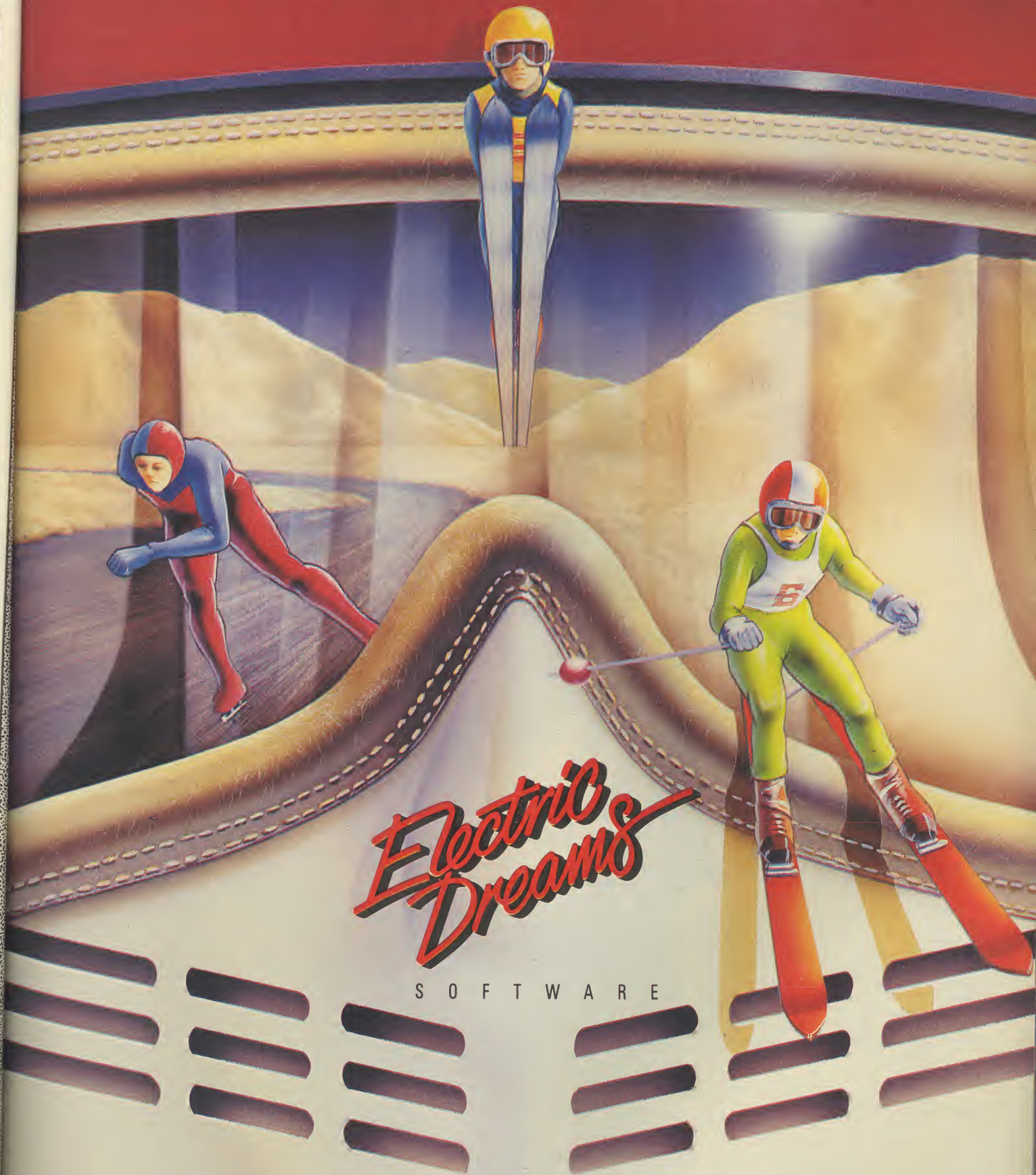
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Out with your caption writer's thinking cap, sharpen a pencil (or biro, if you're daft enough) and fill in the speech bubble. Send off the piccy, remembering to add your name and address, and you could win a prize of epic proportions if your entry arrives by 30th January 1986. Entries please, to PAULA BYRNE's STILL WONDERFUL, CRASH MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB.

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It's amazing what you have to do nowadays, when you work for a company as a Publicity Person. I mean, there was Melbourne House's PAULA BYRNE (she's Wonderful), sitting quietly in the office one day, pondering what she should do to promote the whizzo new wrestling game Big Daddy's Rock'n Wrestle when in stepped the man himself ... In full wrestling gear.

"Aha", said a passing photographer. And "Oho" as an idea crossed his mind. And before Paula could finish writing the press release telling people about the 25 different wrestling moves contained in the game, she found herself in a corridor, with Big Daddy's arm round her neck being snapped by the superkeen lensman for a publicity shot.

Then it was back to the office for Paula, to add the paragraph about the ten opponents you meet in the game and the rock sound track that plays along while you wrestle. All in the the working day of your average Melbourne House Publicity Person, you understand.

And now the photo has been developed, printed and sent to sunny Ludlow. Paula, you see, was a bit stuck as to how to caption it. So she decided to offer one set of Melbourne House's complete works to the writer of the best caption for the photie. And fifty copies of the game BIG DADDY'S ROCK 'N WRESTLE will go to the runners up. So if you think you're the wittiest person alive, here's your chance to cash in on your talent.

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orkof Melbourne House for the Spectrum



So. Now you know. When it comes to prancing around on camels, Lawrence of Arabia didn't quite corner the market. STEVE CARGILL, the programmer responsible for the fighting game that has lots of Eastern Promise, FIGHTING WARRIOR, is seen here dressed in his Mum's best curtains atop a camel. (After that BIG DADDY snap, Ms Byrne of Melbourne House had to get her own back on someone, didn't she!)

Quite where he found a camel in North London still remains a mystery, but no matter. Your faithful Competition Minion has secured a second Caption Competition from the Wonderful PAULA BYRNE of Melbourne House. This time you need to come up with a witty, pithy,

snappy comment to pop into Steve's speech bubble.

And as you can see, Steve is looking suitably vicious — maybe he doesn't like camels too much? Whatever the reason for his grimacing, it's up to you to write a little scriptlet which puts words into his mouth (or bubble).

The wittiest bubble filler will win a full set of Melbourne House software for the Spectrum — and of course there are fifty copies of FIGHTING WARRIOR to be won as consolation prizes. You too could be chopping and hacking your way across the desert on a quest to save the princess who's locked away in a pyramid. And all

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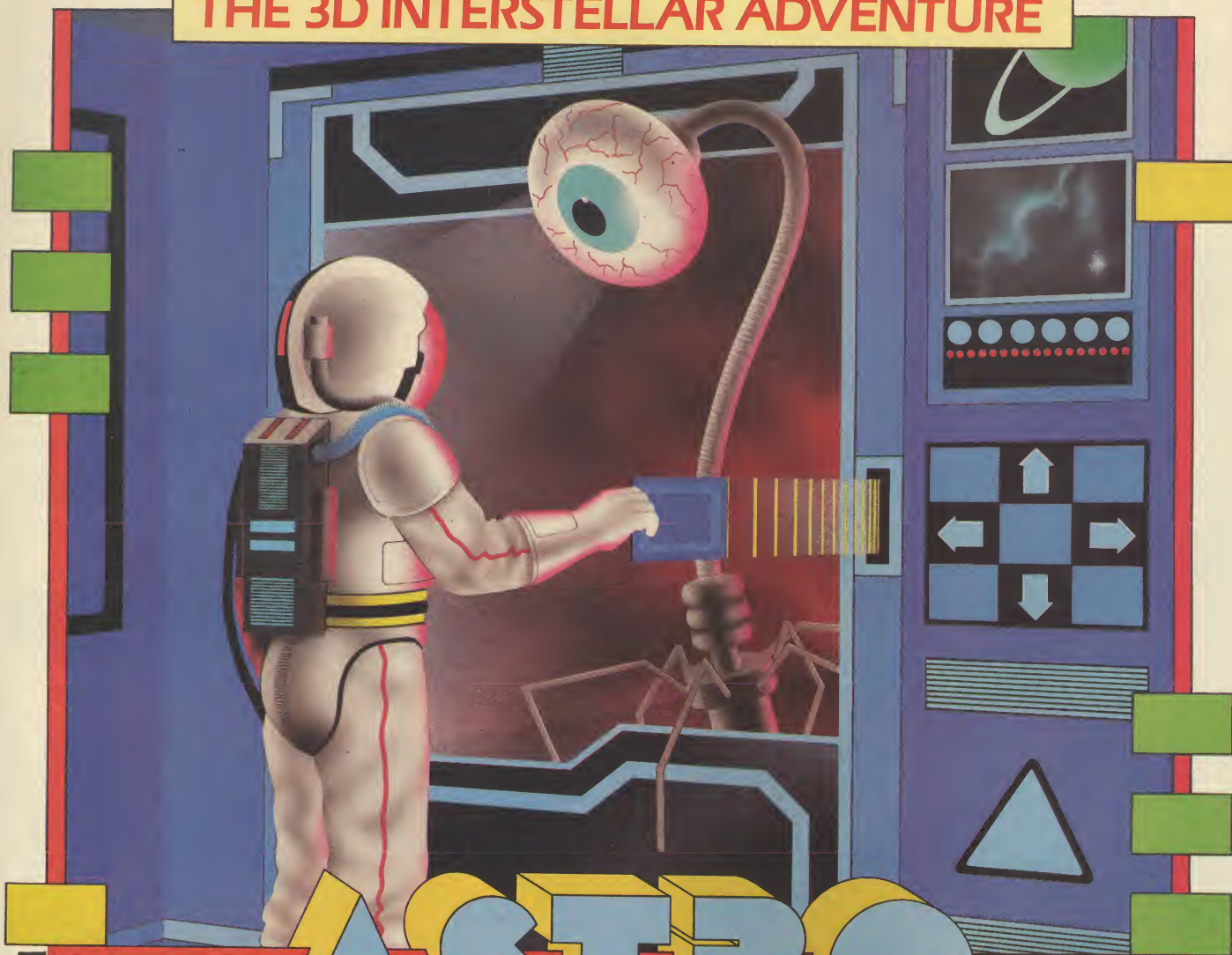


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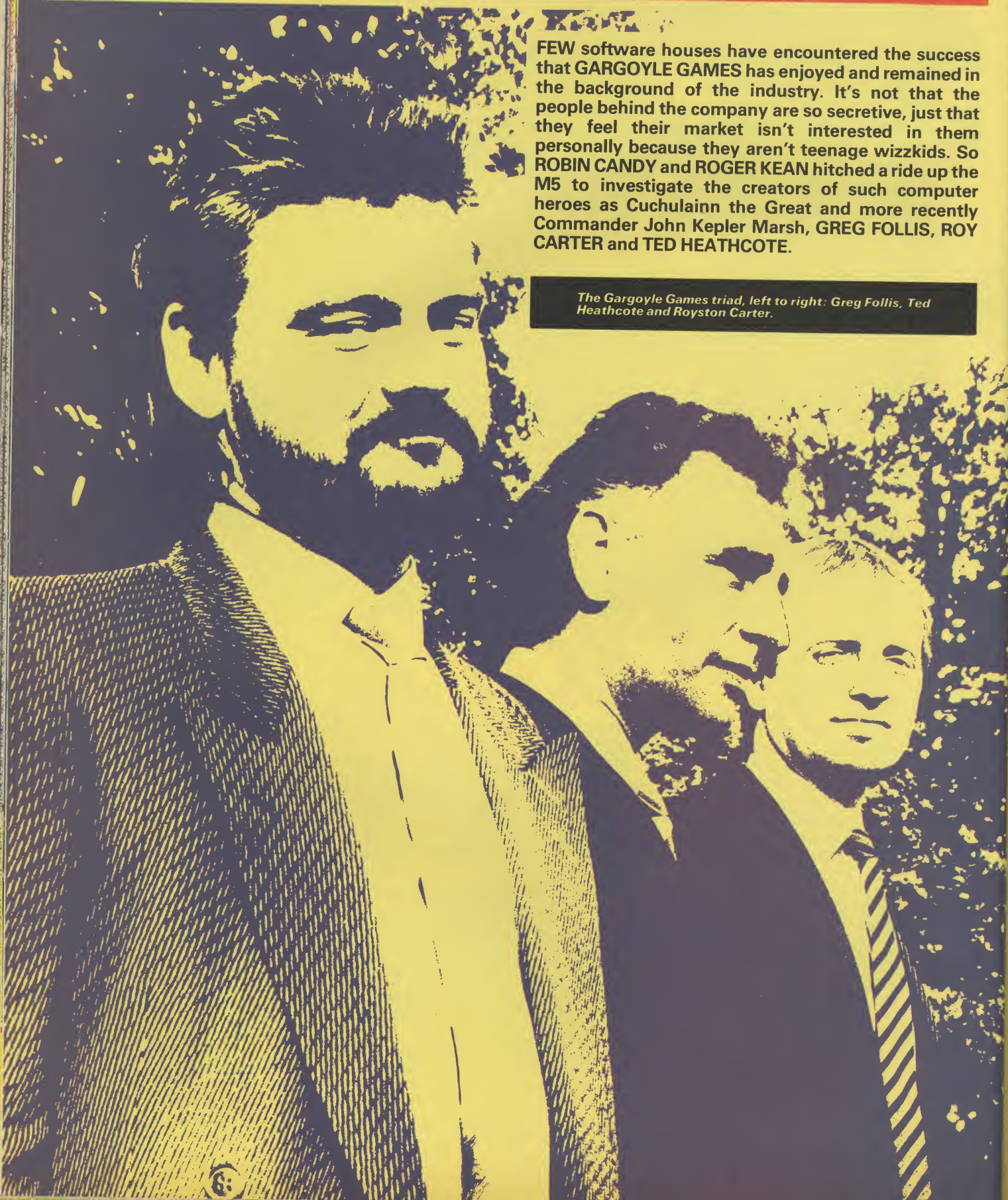
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PLAYING WITH GRANDFATHER'S ABACUS

FEW software houses have encountered the success that GARGOYLE GAMES has enjoyed and remained in the background of the industry. It's not that the people behind the company are so secretive, just that they feel their market isn't interested in them personally because they aren't teenage wizzkids. So ROBIN CANDY and ROGER KEAN hitched a ride up the M5 to investigate the creators of such computer heroes as Cuchulainn the Great and more recently Commander John Kepler Marsh, GREG FOLLIS, ROY CARTER and TED HEATHCOTE.

The Gargoyle Games triad, left to right: Greg Follis, Ted Heathcote and Royston Carter.



King Street, Dudley is unprepossessing and busy. Far from being some gilded cathedral to computer art, complete with gruesome figurines attached to the high corners, the headquarters of Gargoyle Games is on the third floor of a modest, four-floor brick and concrete office block with an insurance company just below it and the smell of disinfectant haunting the cold stairways. The space consists of an office for Ted, who does the selling, a writing room for Greg and Roy, and a stock room with some games and boxes of toys. The toys are important.

The computer industry has always been associated with wizzkids who discovered computers overnight and made a fortune but Gargoyle Games' graduation into the home computer market has been a different pan of chips altogether. It all started about seventeen years ago in a computer research department where Royston (his full name, though Roy will do) and Greg worked for a large services bureau. This entailed them working at the larger end of the computer market and gradually throughout the years they've come down in machine size, though Greg admits that the mini computers they worked on weren't necessarily more powerful than the home micros today.

'The first one I started on,' he says, 'had the same power as an Amstrad and wouldn't have fit in this room, it was an 8K machine, an ICL 1901. It was very slow. We used to play Grandfather's Abacus on it. That's how it all started, I suppose,' he adds, referring to games.

'No you were hatched,' quips Roy disproving the myth that Greg is the only one with an operative larynx. In fact listening to these two is like watching two stand-up comedians.

'I started on computers at a company called Hewitts,' continues an unperturbed Greg Follis. 'I was employed by them as a programmer in the central computer. I worked as a programmer for a few years until they decided my talents might be more usefully employed in analysis. I asked "What's the money like?" They said, "It's better," so I said, "I'm an analyst"'. Greg's new job brought him more into contact with Roy. 'When we started, we didn't like each other very much, I can't remember why — well I can, I can remember exactly...'

It was nothing to do with you at all,' snaps back Roy.

'You didn't like me!

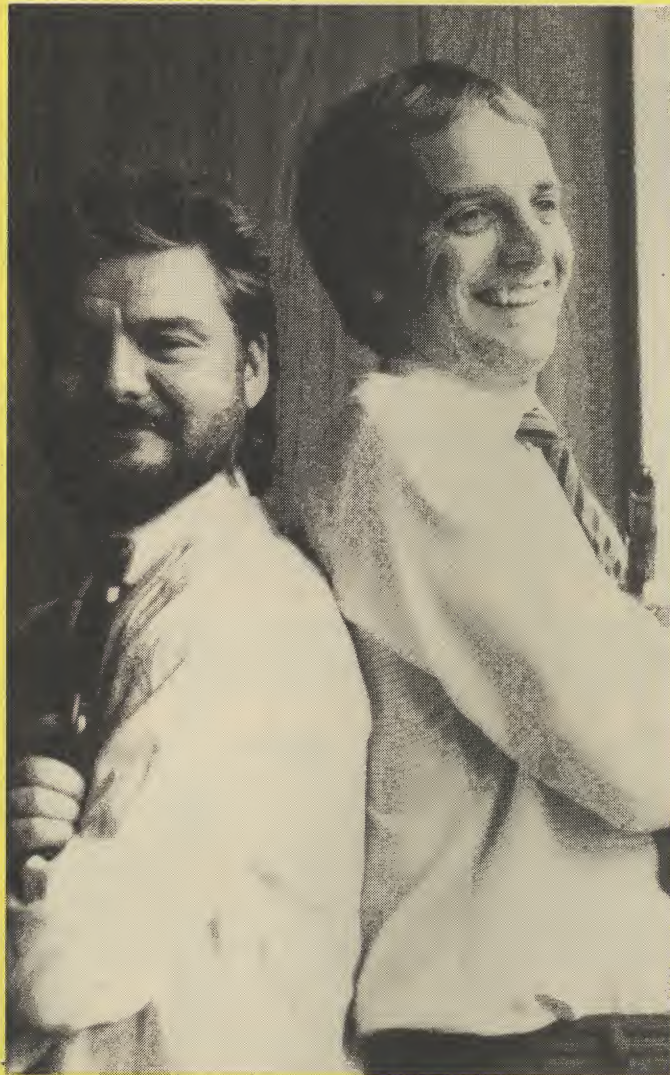
'That's right, and you didn't like me!'

Having established this hate relationship, they ended up getting together over a computer program and decided what everyone knew all along — they liked each other, and because they had a lot of fun working on the program they decided that if they could be in the same department it would mean that they could have a lot more fun. So they developed a brilliant scheme.

'We invented this new department called New Products-Research and Development,' continues Greg. 'The management said, "What a great idea! You can make up new products", which of course we never did. We actually got our own office, I suspect simply because we had a lot of fun and made a lot of noise which never actually stopped us with the work we were doing, but stopped everybody else working. But we had an awful lot of fun, more fun than we have now. We did eventually write some very good programs for them in the end, one of which was fairly important, which they've just started selling, something that

and book advertising. Feeling that they could duplicate the standard of software presently on the market without any massive financial (or time) commitment of any sort they dived straight in at the deep end with their first game Ad Astra.

'The thing that actually attracted us to games was that it was a method to make money that we could afford,' says Greg. 'We both have mortgages and commitments that you can't throw away. We couldn't have done it any other way because we simply didn't have the backing. We had been involved in business, though, and knew some of the pitfalls. At the time we were still working in the New Products



Follis and Carter in playful mood — the guns are for sniping passing security guards.

we felt should have been sold three or four years ago.'

They had been working for the company for around 15 years when press rumours that teenage 'programmers' were earning fortunes prodded their own feelings about getting on and prompted them to turn their attention to games outside daily business work. At this point Ted Heathcote, long term friend of Greg's, was roped in to sell games for the envisaged firm

Department, so Ad Astra was developed in our spare time. Consequently it took nine months to develop which was an appallingly long time. We could put Ad Astra together in a few weeks nowadays.'

Ad Astra was released when CRASH was still a fledgling magazine and it was a mild surprise to find a young, promising software house so near to home. The game rated 80% with particular recognition of the



Graphics, which at time were stunning. As soon as Ad Astra was released work on Tir Na Nog began. Contrary to popular belief, Tir Na Nog's origins do not lie in Fighting Fantasy.

'One day after releasing Ad Astra I wrote this routine which showed a character walking in a scrolling background, Roy recalls. Greg thought it 'looked nice', so then they looked around for a scenario which fitted the character.

'Eventually we found Cuchulainn and so Tir Na Nog was born.'

With the exception of Ad Astra, all of Gargoyle's games have carefully worked out plots which lend an almost unique atmosphere to the game. It is this atmosphere and the intricate problems that make games like Marsport classics.

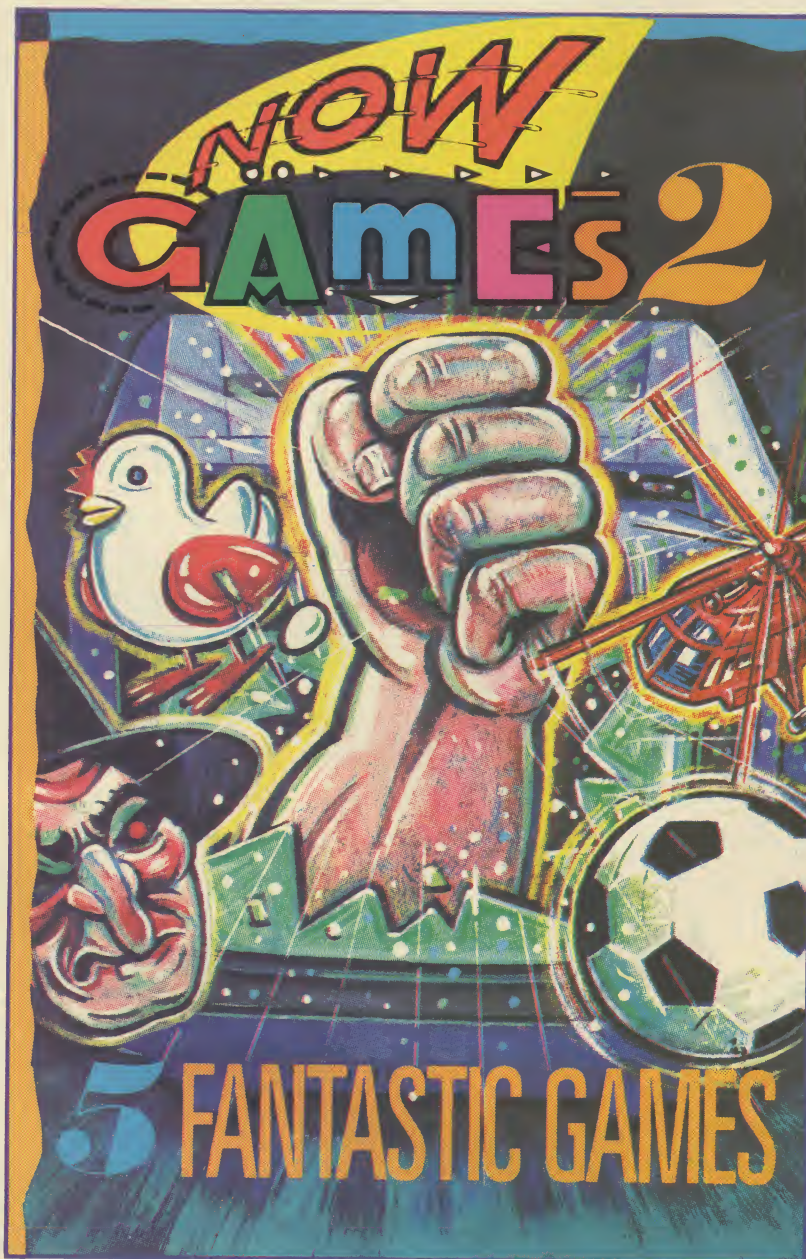
'The apparent literary content of our storylines comes about simply because we enjoy reading stories,' Greg says modestly. 'We make stories that we enjoy. We make stories that seem to be the tip of the iceberg, so you always have the impression that there was a lot more going on that you didn't know about, and the resultant effect is that you are completing the story as you complete the game, something like a movie where the outcome is up to you. That is what we're aiming for, a true computer movie that is realistic. And we like to think that we achieve that in our games. I think a lot of adventure type stuff needs a story behind it, and fantasy material like Lord of the Rings, can provide an ethos to build problems and work out a taxing game.'

Greg and Roy work closely together. 'We get an idea for a scenario and then make up the problems as we go along, two thirds of the game's ideas are my creation the rest come mainly from Royston. Our next game Sweevo's World, however, is aimed more at the arcade market but it still fits into the Marsport/Siege of Earth trilogy, scenario. The game is intended to a bit of fun. If people play it and say "that was fun" then the game has achieved the purpose for which it was designed. The industry is far too serious now. It needs more fun injected into it, after all it is an entertainment industry.'

On the thorny subject of piracy Gargoyle Games have been almost alone in preferring to concentrate on perfecting a program rather than spend the time developing protection routines for it. Roy is quite forceful on this point, especially when it comes to discussing how many potential sales are lost through illegal copying. 'I would suggest

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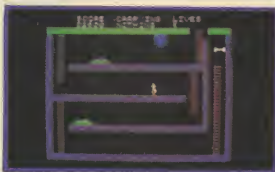
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All screenshots from the Commodore 64

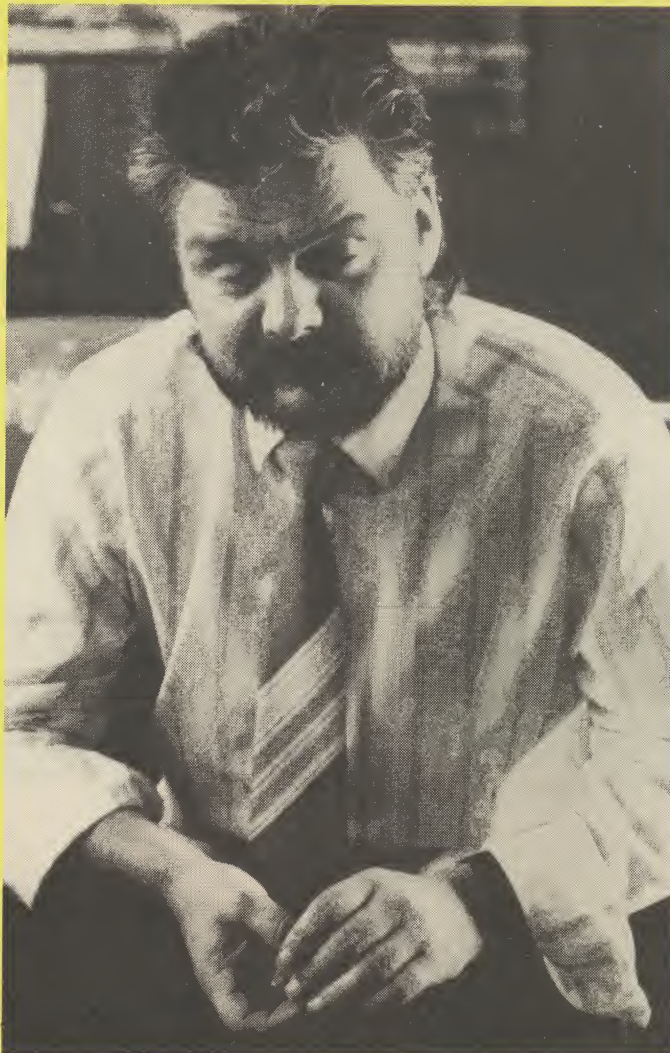


that we lose 50% of potential sales on every game **not** through piracy but by **not** having adequate PR. That's a fairly reasonable figure. Protection routines are obviously directed towards the odd few hackers that are around, but who cares if they know what your code is? I can't see that it is that important if someone knows what your code is. There is no way of stopping tape-to-tape copying.'

After Sweevo's World Gargoyle intend returning to the more serious game with the second installment in the *Siege of Earth* trilogy, Fornax. The format for this will be totally different from anything that Gargoyle have done before. Although there will be still be various problems which have to be overcome to complete the game, the presentation will be radically different. Greg suggests that Fornax will probably end up as a mixed media game, perhaps using icons and/or sentence input using semantic analysis of sentences rather than syntactic — this will be quite new. Before starting Gargoyle they had been sent on artificial intelligence courses where they learned certain elements of AI which Greg and Roy now hope to incorporate into later games to form what Greg calls a sort of cross between *Dun Darach* and 'Crossroads'. But whatever turns up in Fornax you can be sure that it will have plenty of animation and beautiful graphics along with intricate puzzles. Fornax should turn out to be innovative while still being fun, the ingredients Gargoyle feel are necessary to make a hit game.

'There's a lot of new ideas about at the moment,' says Greg. 'It's very difficult, but you have to constantly learn from previous hits released by other software houses. I would be quite happy to turn out *Dun Darachs* but there's a market out there and say 50% of it is buying Daley Thompson's *Decathlon* so you've got to go with the market trend. We have plenty of ideas which we know we could develop but time isn't on our side. We've got to release a game every few months in order to live. If we had six months to develop a game we could turn out something at the end of that time that would demolish the competition but we've all got mortgages to pay. In order to translate our ideas into software form we would probably need a Spectrum 349!

'Before we can develop true mega games we have to expand, to employ a few people to take away the things that take up so much of our time — a person to answer the phones would be a real boon as would someone to write some of the less complex but time-consuming routines in our games. There is also the possibility of us stopping the manufacturing side and becoming a development house similar to Denton Designs,' he says looking wistfully at Roy and Ted. 'That isn't a bad idea, it would take out the task of PR straight away.'



The wicked glint in Greg Follis' eye tells you where those puzzles come from.



'Tell him about the football boot, Greg.'



Mention of Denton Designs leads us to talk about the old *Imagine* and the state of the post-boom industry. Gargoyle entered the games industry shortly before the crash of *Imagine* but even though doom and gloom is spouted by the media they believe computer games are here to stay.

'I Don't think that computer games are a fad, they're an industry,' Roy claims. 'It's like TVs and videos are not a fad, it is all encompassed by the electronic entertainment industry and will always be maintained. Eventually Newsfield may not publish magazines but someone will. The industry may change, for example video shops may become laser holograph lenders, the medium will change but the concept of electronic entertainment will continue because it's big business and you can be sure that we will be helping it along.'

To relieve the tension of programming and planning ahead, the backroom of the office is dedicated to toys. The remnants of their programming days with Hewitts litter the floor in boxes of varying sizes, guns of differing calibre wait to be fired once in a while at passing security guards.

'We used to have terrific fun with these,' Greg laughs, holding up a tatty football boot.

'Tell them about the football boot, Greg,' Roy prompts. Greg glances at it as though surprised to see it in his hand.

'Ah, the football boots. A professor friend of ours sent us a pair of football boots (don't know why), which we promptly sent back. He then gave us a load of clues as to their whereabouts which eventually led to us going to Ibiza to dig up a football boot. We will have to hide this one and give him a set of clues to find it again.'

Leaving the tiny offices, with their disinfectant-smelling stairways and a playroom full of mechanical fly swatters, whoopee cushions and toy guns, I am left with the distinct impression that it is their creators and not Cuchulainn and Marsh who are truly the heroes. The spirit of the software industry lies in such small but professional outfits who, by hard work and excellent products, are leading the way towards an electronic environment where reality and fantasy will be indistinguishable. It may not have been a world-shattering event, but for the Spectrum and computer games in general, the hatching of the Gargoyle was a truly remarkable event.

Robin Candy, with help from Roger Kean who held his CRASH cap and took the pictures when told.



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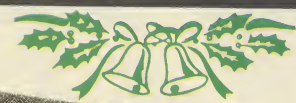
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It is your task to help him gather the rocks he needs to build the house that will secure him Wilma's love. But all is not roses in prehistoric days and Fred has to contend with evil killer turtles and swooping pterodactyls that sap his energy. Fred needs to find a car to zoom around collecting building materials to make his love nest -

and to visit Wilma to recharge his emotional batteries and replenish his strength.

But once he's made his home, Fred will need a home computer won't he? And that's where you come in ... If you want to enter this competition and stand a chance of winning a super GEC colour telly, or a modem, or even one of the twenty five copies of the game Quicksilva are offering as prizes, you'll have to design a suitably prehistoric computer for Fred to play games on.

So get your book of Prehistoric Rock Computer Components down from the bookshelf, collect together your Stone Age Electronics Magazines, and get thinking. Design a computer for Fred and Family that would fit in with his lifestyle and send your technical drawing, painting or full four hundred page specification in to FRED'S COMPUTER, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB to arrive by 30th January 1986. Our very own in-house Neanderthal Techno-Boffin, Mr Gary Liddon will put down his club, leave his lunch, and judge the competition on that day.

Still on top!



U.S. GOLD 1986 ALL STAR SOFTWARE

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
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M·A·R·C·H

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
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F·E·B·R·U·A·R·Y

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A·P·R·I·L

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In the months January to June inclusive, copies of Zap, Crash and Amics will contain a collectors star, as will selected games from the U S Gold range. Collect a star from each source, for each month, affix it



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J • U • N • E

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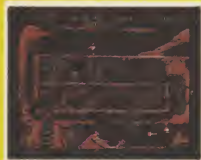
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COMPUTER USERS 1986 DIARY

*Crash
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The nice people at Letts (who are fairly famous for making diaries, amongst other things) have decided to give fifty CRASH readers the chance of coping with all the important things they're going to be doing in 1986. They've launched a diary for computer users, which is an elegant, slim booklet ideal for popping into a coat pocket. Not only is there plenty of space for noting down all your important appointments, but a handy section at the front gives information on all sorts of aspects of computing.

There's a section on computer languages, another on word processors, advice on buying a home computer and lots of valuable snippets of information for you to comb through and carry round with you all year.

But there's more still. Top prize in this competition is a full set of Letts KEYFACTS Revision Software — eight packages of revision software ideal for anyone taking O Levels or CSE

exams. The subjects covered are: Biology, Chemistry, Computer Studies, English Literature, Geography, Mathematics and Physics. You could become a real smart cookie!

What we want you to do, is to write the entries that a school-being of the 21st century might make in a Lett's Diary in 2186. It'll get the old grey matter working after an overdose of Christmas Pud — and you could start 1986 in a very organised way!

HURRY, HURRY, HURRY, though. As the prizes for this comp are in fact diaries for 1986, we'll be drawing this competition a little earlier than the others in this issue. Whizz your entries in DIARY COMPETITION, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB to arrive by 3rd January. (That's the evil Kidd's Birthday, by the way, so we'll make him draw the competition as a present! HEE HEE — COMP MINION).

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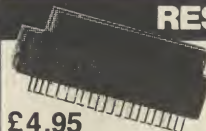
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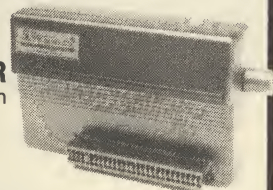
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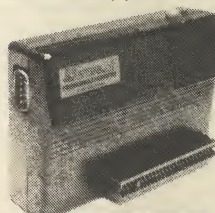
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PLAYING TIPS

from **ROBIN CANDY**

AND THEN THERE WERE POKES



This is what you've all been waiting for, the Christmas Pokes Special with all the handy cheats that should help you out. DON'T use any of these routines if you think they might spoil your enjoyment of these games.

About a year ago I made my debut in CRASH with a Pokes article similar to this one. Those were the days when Hyperloads were few and far between and you could MERGE games to put routines for cheating in; nowadays the routines are much bigger and resemble mini listings. This little lot of pokes is approximately 25K long whereas a year

ago they would have only taken up 2K at the most. It is a bit of a shame that you have to go to such lengths just to cheat. Some may say that you shouldn't have to cheat, but the average game player finds most games a bit difficult. Anyway it looks as if the Hyperloads are here to stay and you will have to endure long listings. There shouldn't be any errors in the listings especially the long ones — they've all been checked. Special thanks to Keith Walker and Phil Churchyard without whom this pokes special wouldn't be possible.

HALLS OF THE THINGS

This Design Design game is quite old now and it was probably the first game with protection on it. Anyway these pokes should help if you're still stuck.

1 REM POKES FOR THE THINGS
10 CLEAR 65535: POKE 23658,8:
LET F = 65024
20 PRINT AT 8,6; "DO YOU
WISH INFINITE"; AT 12,13; "Y/
N"
40 PRINT AT 10,12; "MAGIC"
50 GOSUB 1000
60 IF A\$ = "Y" THEN RESTORE
200: GOSUB 2000
70 PRINT AT 10,12; "ENERGY"
80 GOSUB 1000
90 IF A\$ = "Y" THEN RESTORE
210: GOSUB 2000
100 PRINT AT 10,12;
"ARROWS"
110 GOSUB 1000

120 IF A\$ = "Y" THEN RESTORE
220: GOSUB 2000
130 RESTORE 230: GOSUB 2000
135 CLS: PRINT AT 9,7; "START
HALLS TAPE"
140 POKE 23570, 16: LOAD ""
CODE 61263
150 POKE 61725, 254
160 POKE 65533, 240: POKE
65532,0
170 STOP
200 DATA 6, 175, 50, 3, 1, 30, 50,
100, 131
210 DATA 3, 175, 50, 205, 127
220 DATA 3, 175, 50, 221, 126
230 DATA 2, 195, 0, 96
1000 IF INKEY\$ <> "" THEN
GOTO 1000
1010 LET A\$ = INKEY\$: IF A\$ =
"Y" OR A\$ = "N" THEN
RETURN
1020 GOTO 1010
2000 READ A: FOR F = F TO F +
A: READ A: POKE F,A: NEXT F:
RETURN
INFINITE ARROWS MAGIC
ENERGY

30 READ B: POKE A,B: LET A = A
+ 1: IF B <> 233 THEN GOTO 30
40 RANDOMIZE USR 60018
50 DATA 221, 33, 85, 234, 17
60 DATA 160, 1, 62, 255, 55
70 DATA 205, 86, 5, 48, 241
80 DATA 201, 175, 50, 105, 176
90 DATA 62, 201, 50, 43, 189
100 DATA 233

AVALON

For infinite energy follow this
procedure:
After MERGEing the program
enter POKE 23782, 2: POKE
23876, 201: POKE 23878, 204:
POKE 23879, 227: GOTO 0 then
restart tape

WORSE THINGS HAPPEN AT SEA

These pokes appeared a couple
of months back but there was a
slight error in them. So here
they are in their correct form.

10 CLEAR 25383: LOAD "" CODE
25384
20 FOR A = 23296 TO 23307:
READ B: POKE A,B: NEXT A
30 RANDOMIZE USR 23296:
CLEAR 29999: NEW
40 DATA 17, 48, 117, 1, 194, 101,
33, 88, 152, 237, 176, 201

When the 'Sinclair Research Ltd'
message appears on screen
then enter these pokes.

POKE 35443,0 for infinite droids
POKE 35303,0: POKE 33221,0
for infinite energy
POKE 30008,201 this stops the
ship from sinking when there is
too much water in it.
Then RANDOMIZE USR 31000
to start the game.

CAVERN FIGHTER

Yet another golden oldie which
is a surprisingly good version of
the arcade oldie Scramble. For
those of you who have got the
game just enter this program to
get infinite lives.

5 REM CAVERN FIGHTER
10 LOAD "" CODE: POKE 23380,
201: RANDOMIZE USR 23360
20 POKE 31683, 0: POKE 31684,
0: RANDOMIZE USR 32656
start tape from start

JSW II

This isn't a favourite game of
mine but it does seem that fans
of the original game rate part
two. Listed below is a routine to
get infinite lives, SAVE it to tape
with GOTO 100.

5 REM JSW II POKES
10 CLEAR 63999
20 FOR F = 64000 TO 64053
30 READ A: POKE F,A
40 NEXT F
45 PRINT FLASH 1: "PLAY JSW
II TAPE FROM START"
50 RANDOMIZE USR 64000
60 DATA 49, 200, 250, 221, 33, 0,
0, 17, 136, 0, 62, 255, 55, 205, 86,
5, 48, 238
70 DATA 221, 33, 0, 64, 17, 56,
185, 62, 255, 55, 205, 86, 5
80 DATA 33, 46, 250, 17, 197,
100, 1, 8, 0, 237, 176
90 DATA 243, 195, 0, 95, 62, 195,
50, 22, 122, 195, 0, 112
100 SAVE "LOADER" LINE 10

MONTY ON THE RUN

Definitely a nasty follow up to
Monty Mole, so if you're having
any problems key in this
routine.

WHEELIE

Wheelie is now one of the all
time classics, if you haven't got
it yet then rush out and buy one!
Even though it has been out a
long time now, this is the only
set of pokes that I have received
for it. These give you infinite
lives. Type in the listing and
save it to tape for future use. If
you get an error in data report
then check that you have entered
all the data properly.

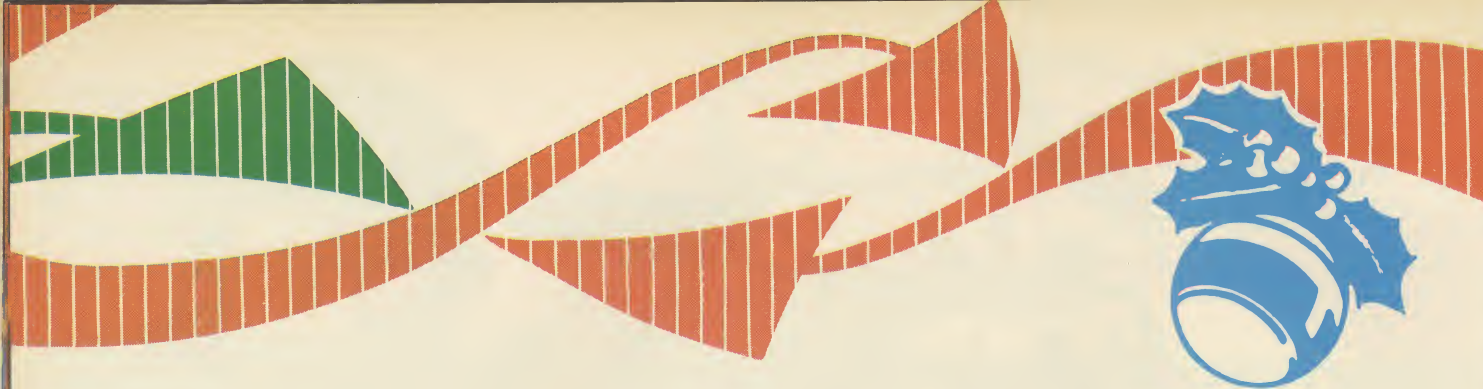
5 REM WHEELIE POKES
10 LET C = 0: FOR A = 23296 TO
23340: READ B: POKE A,B: LET
C = C + B: NEXT A
20 IF <> 5024 THEN PRINT
"ERROR IN DATA": STOP
30 RANDOMIZE USR 23300
40 DATA 175, 50, 21, 91, 49, 0, 0
50 DATA 221, 33, 111, 63, 17,

145, 27
60 DATA 62, 255, 55, 205, 86, 5,
48, 234
70 DATA 221, 33, 108, 98, 17,
125, 152
80 DATA 62, 255, 55, 205, 86, 5,
48, 242
90 DATA 62, 201, 50, 85, 117,
195, 30, 109

FULL THROTTLE

These pokes prevent you from
slowing down plus they allow
you to pass through the other
riders.

5 REM FULL THROTTLE POKES
10 CLEAR 65535: FOR A = 23296
TO 23311: READ B: POKE A,B:
NEXT A
20 RANDOMIZE USR 23296: LET
A = 60232



```

5 REM MOLE 2 POKES
10 PRINT AT 9, 2; "ENTER NO
OF LIVES (6 TO 255)"
20 INPUT A$: BEEP .1, 1
30 IF A$ = "" THEN GO TO 20
40 FOR B = 1 TO LEN A$
50 IF A$(B) < "0" OR A$(B) >
"9" THEN GO TO 20: NEXT B
60 LET LIVES = VAL A$
70 IF LIVES < 6 OR LIVES > 255
THEN GO TO 20
80 BORDER 0: PAPER 0: INK 0:
CLS
90 PRINT INK 7; AT 9, 3; "PLAY
IN MONTY MASTER TAPE"; AT
11, 9; "FROM THE START"
100 LOAD "" CODE
110 POKE 63559, 79
120 POKE 63563, 83
130 POKE 63574, 13
140 POKE 63575, 249
150 POKE 63722, 7
160 FOR N = 63757 TO 63792:
READ A: POKE N, A: NEXT N
170 RANDOMIZE USR 63520
180 DATA 033, 027, 249, 017, 000
190 DATA 064, 001, 022, 000, 237
200 DATA 176, 195, 000, 064, 033
210 DATA 255, 247, 017, 255, 255
220 DATA 001, 000, 165, 237, 184
230 DATA 049, 255, 095, 062,
LIVES
240 DATA 050, 127, 152, 195, 099
250 DATA 169

```

SPYHUNTER

One of Denton Designs' US Gold conversions has attracted a routine to gain infinite lives. Follow the usual procedure of typing in the listing and SAVEing it to tape for future use. Then RUN it and start the Spy Hunter tape from the beginning. If you have made a mistake in your data tape in put then the computer will come back with an error message.

```

5 REM SPY HUNTER POKES
10 CLEAR 65535
20 PRINT AT 9, 1; "PLAY IN SPY
HUNTER MASTER TAPE"; AT
11, 9; "FROM THE START"
30 RESTORE
40 LET TOT = 0
50 FOR N = 65024 TO 65114:
READ A: LET TOT = TOT + A:
NEXT N
60 IF TOT <> 9438 THEN PRINT
AT 0, 0; "ERROR IN DATA":
STOP
70 RANDOMIZE USR 65024
100 DATA 237, 091, 083, 092, 042
110 DATA 089, 092, 043, 205, 229
120 DATA 025, 221, 033, 128, 254
130 DATA 017, 017, 000, 175, 055
140 DATA 205, 086, 005, 042, 083
150 DATA 092, 237, 075, 139, 254
160 DATA 205, 085, 022, 042, 083
170 DATA 092, 237, 091, 143, 254
180 DATA 025, 034, 075, 092, 221
190 DATA 042, 083, 092, 237, 091
200 DATA 139, 254, 062, 255, 055
210 DATA 205, 086, 005, 042, 083
220 DATA 092, 017, 253, 003, 025
230 DATA 235, 033, 086, 254, 001

```

```

240 DATA 005, 000, 237, 176, 033
250 DATA 000, 000, 034, 066, 092
260 DATA 062, 001, 050, 068, 092
270 DATA 201, 120, 074, 108, 098
280 DATA 144

```

NIGHTSHADE

This routine gives infinite lives for Ultimate's recent release. Though it wasn't their best game it is a mappers delight.

```

5 REM NIGHT POKES
10 BORDER 0: PAPER 0: INK 0:
CLS
20 PRINT AT 9, 1; INK 7; "PLAY
IN NIGHTSHADE MASTER
TAPE"; AT 11, 9; "FROM THE
START"
30 FOR N = 1 TO 5
40 PRINT AT 19, 0: LOAD ""
CODE
50 NEXT N
60 POKE 52660, 240
70 POKE 52661, 224
80 POKE 52700, 176
90 POKE 52701, 176
100 POKE 52730, 160
110 POKE 52731, 240
120 POKE 52732, 7
130 POKE 52733, 4
140 PRINT USR 23424

```

TAPPER

This another poke that originally appeared a number of months ago. Though it wasn't printed wrong it only worked if Interface 1 was attached. If you don't possess an Interface 1 then the following routine will allow you to have infinite lives..

```

5 REM TAPPER POKES
10 CLEAR 65535
20 PRINT AT 9, 3; "PLAY IN
TAPPER MASTER TAPE"; AT
11, 9; "FROM THE START"
30 RESTORE
40 LET TOT = 0
50 FOR N = 23296 TO 23395:
READ A: LET TOT = TOT + A:
POKE N, A: NEXT N
60 IF TOT <> 9545 THEN PRINT
AT 0, 0; "ERROR IN DATA":
STOP
70 RANDOMIZE USR 23296
100 DATA 237, 091, 083, 092, 042
110 DATA 089, 092, 043, 205, 229
120 DATA 025, 006, 003, 197, 221
130 DATA 033, 128, 091, 017, 017
140 DATA 000, 175, 055, 205, 086
150 DATA 005, 193, 016, 240, 042
160 DATA 083, 092, 237, 075, 139
170 DATA 091, 205, 085, 022, 042
180 DATA 083, 092, 237, 091, 143
190 DATA 091, 025, 034, 075, 092
200 DATA 221, 042, 083, 092, 237
210 DATA 091, 139, 091, 062, 255
220 DATA 055, 205, 086, 005, 042
230 DATA 083, 092, 017, 244, 003
240 DATA 025, 235, 033, 092, 091
250 DATA 001, 008, 000, 237, 176
260 DATA 033, 000, 000, 034, 066

```

```

270 DATA 092, 062, 001, 050, 068
280 DATA 092, 201, 013, 197, 245
290 DATA 090, 028, 023, 002, 213

```

If you have the old routine then merge this with it to get it to work.

```

50 FOR = 23296 TO 23395: READ
A: LET TOT = TOT + A: POKE N,
A: NEXT N
60 IF TOT <> 9545 THEN PRINT
AT 0, 0; "ERROR IN DATA":
STOP
220 DATA 055, 205, 086, 005, 042
225 DATA 083, 092, 017, 244, 003
230 DATA 025, 235, 033, 092, 091

```

AD ASTRA

Gargoyle Games' original hit has at last got some pokes for it. Just use this routine to gain infinite lives.

```

5 REM AD ASTRA POKES
10 CLEAR 24490
20 LOAD "" SCREEN$
30 LOAD "" CODE
40 LOAD "" CODE
50 POKE 35852, 0: POKE 35853,
0
60 POKE 35854, 0
70 RANDOMIZE USR 33000

```

NIGHTSHADE

This set of pokes get rid of the nasties except for the four main creatures and the fireball.

```

1 REM NIGHTSHADE POKES
5 CLS
10 RESTORE
20 LET TOT = 0
30 FOR I = 23296 TO 23430
40 READ A
50 LET TOT = TOT + A
60 POKE I, A
70 NEXT I
80 IF TOT <> 12907 THEN
PRINT "ERROR IN DATA!!!":
BEEP 1, 50: STOP
90 PRINT AT 0, 0; "START
NIGHTSHADE TAPE. ANY KEY .
": PAUSE 1: PAUSE 0
100 RANDOMIZE USR 23296
1000 DATA 49, 255, 255, 175, 211
1010 DATA 254, 33, 0, 64, 17
1020 DATA 1, 64, 54, 0, 1
1030 DATA 0, 27, 237, 176, 205
1040 DATA 122, 91, 62, 255, 55
1050 DATA 221, 33, 0, 0, 17
1060 DATA 136, 19, 205, 86, 5
1070 DATA 205, 122, 91, 62, 255
1080 DATA 55, 221, 33, 0, 64
1090 DATA 17, 0, 27, 205, 86
1100 DATA 5, 205, 122, 91, 62
1110 DATA 255, 55, 221, 33, 0
1120 DATA 96, 17, 0, 136, 205
1130 DATA 86, 5, 205, 122, 91
1140 DATA 62, 255, 55, 221, 33
1150 DATA 128, 91, 17, 43, 0
1160 DATA 205, 86, 5, 33, 92
1170 DATA 91, 34, 169, 91, 195
1180 DATA 128, 91, 33, 128, 91
1190 DATA 17, 58, 0, 205, 19

```

```

1200 DATA 0, 62, 233, 50, 176
1210 DATA 92, 38, 99, 46, 52
1220 DATA 243, 34, 120, 92, 62
1230 DATA 201, 50, 232, 205, 195
1240 DATA 0, 94, 175, 55, 221
1250 DATA 33, 0, 0, 17, 17
1260 DATA 0, 205, 86, 5, 201

```

GYROSCOPE

Melbourne House's latest Smash is one of those games that is in dire need of pokes. So here they are and I'm sure you will all agree that they are VERY useful.

```

5 REM GYROSCOPE POKES
10 BORDER 0: INK 0: PAPER 0:
CLS
20 RESTORE
30 LET TOT = 0
40 FOR I = 23296 TO 23379
50 READ A: LET TOT = TOT + A
+ A * PEEK (I-23296)
60 POKE I, A
70 NEXT I
80 IF TOT <> 1369766 THEN
PRINT FLASH 1; INK 7; "ERROR
IN DATA!!!": BEEP 1, 0: STOP
90 INPUT "LIVES (0-255) 0 =
INFINITE?": LIVES
100 IF LIVES THEN POKE 23360
,LIVES: GO TO 120
110 POKE 23365, 0
120 INPUT "TIME BEFORE
GYROSCOPE STOPS (0-99) 0 =
INFINITE?": LINE T$
130 LET TIME = VAL T$: IF TIME
<> 0 THEN POKE 23355, INT
(TIME/10): POKE 23354, TIME -
10 * PEEK 23355: POKE 23370
,61
200 PRINT AT 0, 5; "START
GYROSCOPE TAPE"
210 RANDOMIZE USR 23296
1000 DATA 1, 58, 0, 33, 182
1001 DATA 92, 205, 232, 25, 42
1002 DATA 75, 92, 237, 91, 83
1003 DATA 92, 237, 82, 68, 77
1004 DATA 235, 205, 232, 25, 49
1005 DATA 255, 93, 221, 33, 0
1006 DATA 64, 17, 0, 27, 55
1007 DATA 62, 255, 205, 86, 5
1008 DATA 48, 241, 221, 33, 0
1009 DATA 94, 17, 0, 162, 55
1010 DATA 62, 255, 205, 86, 5
1011 DATA 48, 241, 33, 0, 6
1012 DATA 34, 128, 207, 62, 7
1013 DATA 50, 230, 207, 62, 53
1014 DATA 50, 162, 210, 62, 0
1015 DATA 50, 10, 231, 50, 28
1016 DATA 231, 195, 194, 206
9999 STOP

```

PYRAMID

Still a good game now it is made that much easier by the addition of these pokes.

```

1 REM PYRAMID POKES: PRINT
AT 0, 7; "START PYRAMID
TAPE"
2 MERGE ""
5 GO TO 10
280 INPUT "START ENERGY (0-
999) ": LINE E$

```